5 STEPS TO RESUME SUCCESS

Supporting resources at waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment

WAUBONSEE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

2 POWER UP YOUR RESUME CONTENT

1 GETTING PAST APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS

3 A HANDY BULLET FORMULA

4 MAKE OR BREAK FORMAT

5 SHOW OFF YOUR RESUME

For 24/7 access to all of our resources, including the complete
5 Steps to Resume Success series, please visit:
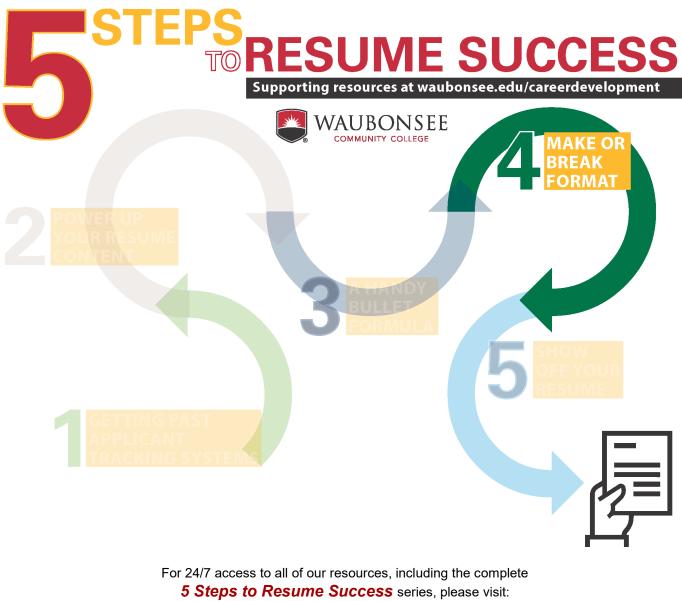www.waubonsee.edu/careerdevelopment

Read This First

Purpose of Resume Formatting & Content Rules
- Maximizes likelihood that Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) can access all resume content/keywords and therefore increase chances of having a person see the resume
- Allows a person to quickly skim the resume and find what s/he is looking for
- Draws attention to the content that is most important for that particular job
- Removes content that is not useful for the employer, outdated, or a potential red flag

Are these rules absolute?
Exceptions to rules in the Resume Guide exist because:
- Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) continue to evolve
- Resume best practices continue to evolve
- Applications or industries may have unique requirements
  - Nursing resumes may not need lengthy Clinical Experience bullet points (because industry knows what skills are gained; ATS not looking for them)
- You're physically handing someone a paper resume, so formatting for an ATS isn't a concern

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Format

Simple formatting makes it more likely that an ATS will be able to scan and parse all of your information. Use the recommendations below to begin formatting your resume in a **blank Word document** or in the Sample General Resume by replacing the sample content with your own. Unfamiliar with these formatting features in Microsoft Word? Want feedback on a resume format decision? Contact Career Development.

LAYOUT & FONT
- ☐ Resume does **not** contain: images, text boxes, tables, content in header/footer fields
  - ✓ Do **not** use resume templates. Start from scratch with a **plain** Word document.
- ☐ Begin with 1-inch margins. Adjust as needed to keep content in sections together.
- ☐ Keep spacing consistent between sections
- ☐ Dates are flush with the right margin on the same line as employer/organization name (for experience) or degree/credential name (for education, licenses, certifications, etc.)
  - ✓ Learn how to use right tabs here: https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/word/indents-and-tabs/1/
- ☐ Use one easy-to-read font. Recommendations: Arial, Calibri, Verdana

ORGANIZATION
- ☐ Content within categories is in reverse chronological order (most recent experience at the top)
- ☐ Headings after the optional Objective/Summary section are organized from most important for the job description to least important

FILE TYPE AND FILE NAME
- ☐ File is saved as a **.docx** (unless the application indicates another file type is acceptable)

- ✓ Some programs, such as Google Docs and Pages, do not export formatting well into .docx
- ✓ As a student you have access to a **FREE** version of the entire Microsoft Office Suite! Grab your free download here: https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/education/products/office
- ☐ File name is "FirstName LastName_Job Title (of position you are applying for)"
  - ✓ Example: "Riley Smith_Inside Sales Rep"
  - ✓ When applying, follow any naming conventions outlined in the application

Resume Sections

Section/heading names allow ATS to properly scan and score your content and allows a person to quickly skim your resume to find the content they need. The Resume Sections part of this guide shows common sections/headings to include, what content to include within these sections, and how to format the content.

CONTACT INFORMATION

RILEY SMITH   `Name: 14pt, bold`

1092 First Avenue Sugar Grove, IL 60554 ● 222.333.444 ● rileysmith@email.com ● www.linkedin.com/in/rileysmith

`Content: 11pt`

Current contact information should appear at the top of the first page of your resume, preferably justified to the left or centered.

- ☐ Phone number has a professional voicemail message
- ☐ Email is professional (no slang/cute/funny/inappropriate terms or numbers that look like birthdates)
- ☐ LinkedIn URL is personalized
- ☐ *If you are moving soon:* indicate the last date that you may be reached at your present address and cell phone number, and include a permanent address and cell phone number to provide an alternate way to be reached

OBJECTIVE

OBJECTIVE   `Heading: 12pt, uppercase, bold`

Customer Relations professional looking to utilize interpersonal skills and problem-solving skills in a Sales Associate position in order to increase sales and improve efficiency.

`Content: 11pt`

- ☐ Highlights the skills, education, or experience you have that are highly desired in the job description
- ☐ Tailored for each position/application
- ☐ Section is located on resume directly below contact info
- ☐ Avoids clichés ("results-driven," "team player," "detail-oriented," "hard worker")
- ☐ Mentions the outcome you will help the company achieve

Fill-in-the-blank example:

"___[*industry*]___ professional looking to utilize ___[*skill/experience*]__ and __[*skill*]__ skills in a ___[*job title*]__ position in order to ___[a company goal you will help them achieve]____."

Objective/Summary Examples*:*

- Psychology student with hands-on experience delivering services to autistic children and assisting with development of classroom activities to stimulate learning. Keen interest and background in multicultural and diversity issues related to autism. Strengths include organizational skills, taking initiative, and program development.

- Human Resources Generalist looking to capitalize on strong organizational skills and one year of recruiting experience in order to improve employee retention and engagement.

- Human Resources Generalist with experience recruiting, on boarding, and FMLA procedures. Presently working to increase employee engagement and offers bilingual Spanish/English translation abilities. Demonstrated organizational, leadership, and communication skills.

- Recent Health Information Technology graduate offering extensive administrative experience and strong customer service skills. Enjoys managing and organizing data. Offers the ability to adapt to changing priorities, problem-solve, and maintain confidentiality.

EDUCATION

Degree in progress?
List month and year you will graduate.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Sociology   May 2021
Illinois University, Chicago, IL

Associate in Arts, History   May 2019
Waubonsee Community College, Sugar Grove, IL
GPA: 3.8/4.0
- Study abroad Fall 2019: Canterbury, England
- National Technical Honors Society

Many honors and awards? Create a separate section.

- ☐ Degree/credential in progress: date listed is the month and year you anticipate graduating
- ☐ GPA of 3.0/4.0 or higher is listed (optional)
- ☐ Not listed: colleges/programs you attended, but did not graduate from, and programs you have not yet enrolled in (can list once admitted to the institution)
- ☐ Not listed: coursework (you may opt to highlight specialized courses in your cover letter)
- ☐ Honors and awards are under the appropriate institution (Dean's List, scholarships, fellowships or other awards)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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ABC INSURANCE, Aurora, IL   July 2019 – Present
Marketing Support Clerk
- Conduct an average of 50-75 telephone interviews per week with customers from target markets
- Draft marketing materials for print and social media publications using Publisher and Adobe Spark

☐ Includes internships, part-time and full-time jobs related to your degree, self-employment, and teaching positions

✓ Self-employment includes: babysitting, pet sitting, unpaid work assisting a family member with their small business, or household responsibilities whose tasks correspond to an O*NET Job Summary

☐ If you have an extensive work history: begin with past 10 years of experience. For each additional position, ask yourself if the keywords/accomplishments add value for that particular position you are seeking

☐ Few entries have more than 5 bullet points

☐ Most relevant bulleted accomplishment statements are at the top of bullet point lists

☐ Uses fewer bullet points for position off lesser interest to employer, more bullet points for those of greater relevancy

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS	
Registered Nurse – Illinois	July 2019
Mental Health First Aid Certificate	November 2018 – November 2019

☐ List national or state licensure exams you will soon be taking

☐ Do **not** list irrelevant licenses or certifications

LANGUAGE SKILLS

LANGUAGE
Spanish: intermediate speaking and writing skills

☐ Lists languages other than English that you can read, speak, or write

☐ Includes the level of fluency using terminology found in job descriptions (i.e. "bilingual," "fluent in,")

☐ Indicates which area(s) you are skilled in: reading, writing, or speaking.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

This section is for your work with professional organizations in your field, such as AHIMA or NSNA, through membership, board positions, committees, projects, and other types of service. If you held a leadership role or made a significant contribution, add a descriptive bullet point using the SOAR Formula.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS	
Member, National Technical Honor Society	March 2018 – Present
Student Leader, American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA)	January 2017 - Present

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

COMMUNITY CENTER, Yorkville, IL   July 2017 – Present
Youth Programming Volunteer
- Create and manage Youth Programming department's Facebook page that has increased RSVPs and attendance at events by 60% since 2016

☐ Include entries without bullets if position adds value other than keywords

TECHNICAL SKILLS

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Proficient in Microsoft Word, Google Docs, ERP
Familiar with Excel, SAP, Google Analytics
Basic in EPIC

☐ Describes proficiency with phrases found in job description (or words such as proficient, functional, and basic)

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
☐ Includes skills that are relevant, but don't easily fit within another section
☐ Contents are accurate and specific like SOAR Formula bullets; this is **not** a section to lump soft skills (i.e. strong work ethic, team player) without justification or context

REFERENCES
Do not put references or "references available upon request" on the resume. When requested, supply references as a separate document.
☐ Call or speak with potential references—each time you plan to use them—to confirm they want to be your references
☐ Share a brief description of the position you interviewed for and how your previous experience relates to the future position

In a separate Word document, create a list of three to five references.

REFERENCES

Jane Doe
Operations Manager, CoolCompany
200 Company Dr. Sugar Grove, IL 60554
janedoe@companyname.com
630.555.1234
Relationship: Former supervisor
Years known: 2

☐ At the top of the page, copy and paste your name and contact information from your resume

Bullet Points

The Resume Guide is part of Step 4 of the *5 Steps to Resume Success.* Complete Steps 2 & 3 focus to write high quality content.

SOAR Formula Examples:
- Counseled adults with severe mental illness in the areas of living skills and interpersonal relationships that resulted in 55% of clients obtaining jobs based on their ability to demonstrate appropriate behaviors
- Produced unit plan focused on checking accounts; supervised a team of 4 in the student-operated school store and greenhouse
- Resolved customer inquiries and complaints in a polite and efficient manner

Review the content you wrote during Steps 2 & 3 of the *5 Steps to Resume Success*:
- ☐ Each bullet point begins with an action verb
- ☐ No exaggerations, false claims (or un-personalized content from the Sample General Resume)
- ☐ Uses keywords and phrases from job description (that accurately describe your experience)
  - ✓ *Along with the skills you possess, employers are most interested in contributions and the results you achieved while completing tasks. Whenever possible, select concrete examples that illustrate your success.*
- ☐ Each bullet point has at least one unique detail addressing desired employer outcomes
- ☐ No names or personal details of people remain in your SOAR stories
- ☐ No personal information such as marital status, birth date, or children's names

Check for overlooked content:
- ☐ Accomplishments and activities in professional or student organizations
- ☐ Self-employment, gig work
- ☐ Professional development: seminars, conferences, webinars, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

What's Next?

PROOFREAD
Read your resume aloud and have at least one other person read your resume before you submit it.
- ☐ No misspellings
- ☐ No personal pronouns (I, my, them, their, our)
- ☐ No "etc."
- ☐ No abbreviations (unless they appear in the job description, then use with caution)
- ☐ Past tense verbs are used for previous jobs and present tense verbs are used for current roles

UPLOAD YOUR RESUME TO WAUBONSEECAREERNETWORK.COM

www.WaubonseeCareerNetwork.com is an online job board for Waubonsee students, alumni, and community members. Every employer registration and job posting is reviewed by a real person before approval. When you upload your resume, it is sent to an Academic and Career Advisor for review. Once approved, your resume is searchable by approved employers.

Should I upload my resume to another online job board?
The best use of online job boards is to research job openings. Then, bypass the job board and go directly to the employer's website to apply. Posting your resume on a website such as indeed.com is different from uploading your resume during a job application at employer's website because other employers can find your resume through a search mechanism.

PROS:
- You may be scouted by a company you otherwise wouldn't have known was hiring

CONS:
- If you are currently employed, you may prefer to be more discreet in your job search.
- Once you put your resume on the internet, you relinquish control over how it is seen, by whom, and if they are viewing the most updated version.
- Scammers make create fake employer accounts to access contact information and resumes

An alternative to posting your resume online is creating and curating a www.LinkedIn.com profile. You can signal to recruiters that you are open to job offers by adjusting your job seeking preferences in Settings & Privacy.

PRINTED VERSIONS OF RESUMES
- ☐ If you have a second page, place your name followed by your email or phone number at the top
- ☐ Justify the page number to the right.
- ☐ Print copies of your resume on a high-quality printer. Since most resumes are sent electronically, you do not need to invest in expensive resume paper.

MORE RESUME RESOURCES
Career Sherpa is a reputable online source of up-to-date resume best practices
- https://careersherpa.net/