



Key to Success

Writing a

Stand-Out Resume and

Cover Letter

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Math & Psychology 201

TRUE OR FALSE?

“Your resume should never be longer than one page.”

TRUE OR FALSE?

“Your resume should include an objective at the top.”

TRUE OR FALSE?

“Your references should be listed at the bottom of your resume.”

Answers

- **FALSE:** “Your resume should never be longer than one page.”
- **FALSE:** “Your resume should include an objective statement at the top.”
- **FALSE:** “Your references should be listed at the bottom of the page.”

What does a “stand-out” resume look like?

- **WELL-STRUCTURED** (clear, consistent)
- **CORRECT** (follows basic resume rules)
- **TARGETED** (emphasizes skills, experiences, classes that relate to the position)
- **DETAILED** (gives examples)

What's the difference?

OUTDATED RESUME:

- Multiple pages
- Includes all activities
- Follows a standard template
- No organizational structure
- Same resume for every job

COLLEGE & CAREER RESUME:

- One page
- Includes significant and/or relevant activities and volunteering
- Sections can be adjusted as needed
- Skills are articulated
- Multiple versions tailored to each position

Job Descriptions

- Print or copy into document
- Highlight/Underline:
 - Qualifications that you possess
 - Activities/duties you have experience with or knowledge of
 - Things you have done before
 - Key skills
 - What excites you about the job
- Application instructions



You want the employer to think...

- 1) “This candidate has the *skills, knowledge, and experience* for this position.”
- 2) “This candidate is *smart and savvy* enough to create a good-looking resume.”
- 3) “This candidate is *impressive!*”

What do employers want?

Communication
– Written

Communication
- Verbal

Leadership

Teamwork -
Collaboration

Problem
Solving

Analytical

Technical

Critical Thinking

Broad
Knowledge –
Liberal Arts

Global Issues

Innovation –
Creativity

Experience

National Association of Colleges & Employers

Structuring Your Content

STEP ONE

Section headers

NON-NEGOTIABLE:

- Contact
- Education
- Experience
 - *Create sections to highlight key related experiences*

OPTIONAL:

- Skills
- Objective or Summary
- Related Coursework
- Projects
- Volunteering
- Campus Activities
- Leadership
- Honors & Awards
- Certifications
- Memberships
- Publications
- Presentations

For each experience, include:

1. Your title, role, or degree/certificate earned
2. Name of organization or school
3. Location - City and state (or school)
4. Range of dates (months instead of semesters)

CONTACT

Maria Ramirez

1234 Regency Lane, Halethorpe, MD 21253

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(410) 455-1234

[Linkedin.com/in/mariaramirez](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mariaramirez)

Maria Ramirez

1234 Regency Lane, Halethorpe, MD 21253 ▪ mramirez1@umbc.edu ▪ (410) 455-1234

TIP: Be sure your
voicemail message is
professional!

EDUCATION

- Degree and major
 - Bachelor of Science, Information Systems or B.A. in Economics
- Graduation date (Month and Year)
- GPA and academic achievements
- Transfer credits not required unless a degree was earned
- No high school

EDUCATION

Sample Format:

EDUCATION

Master of Science, Computer Science

University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), Baltimore, MD

May 2023

- GPA: 3.4/4.0

B.A. in Communication

May 2023

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

- GPA: 3.8/4.0

ALL experiences count!

- Jobs
- Internships
- Volunteering (significant)
- School activities (especially leadership)
- Study abroad
- Independent projects
- Military Service

EXPERIENCE

Subway, Fulton, MD

Cashier, December 2022-Present

- Provided outstanding customer service by greeting each patron and striving to fulfill all orders in under five minutes
- Volunteered for the responsibility of closing the store on weeknights as needed, following established security procedures
- Recognized as a top up-seller, resulting in increase revenue

Hirsch and Klozman LLC, Silver Spring, MD

Legal Intern, September 2021-December 2022

- Conduct background research to support clients' civil cases
- Manage multiple phone lines, efficiently satisfying each caller's needs while maintaining a professional demeanor

Which combination works for you?

- RELATED EXPERIENCE / OTHER EXPERIENCE
- INTERNSHIPS / WORK HISTORY / VOLUNTEERING
- RESEARCH EXPERIENCE / CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE
- Any other combination!

Highlight your MOST RELEVANT experiences by:

- 1) Allowing them to take up more space***
- 2) Moving them higher on the page***

For example...

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE or LEGAL EXPERIENCE

Hirsch and Klozman LLC, Silver Spring, MD

Legal Intern, September 2022-December 2022

- Conducted background research to support clients' civil cases
- Managed multiple phone lines, efficiently satisfying each caller's needs...

WORK EXPERIENCE or CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Subway, Fulton, MD

Cashier, December 2021-Present

- Provide outstanding customer service by greeting each patron and striving to fulfill all orders in under five minutes
- Volunteer for the responsibility of closing the store on weeknights as needed, following established security procedures

Writing Your Bullets

STEP TWO

Writing Bullet Points: Ask yourself...

- **WHAT** exactly did I do? (details)
- **HOW** exactly did I do it? (techniques)
- **WHO** was I working with/for?
- **WHY** was I doing it? (higher purpose)
- What was the **RESULT** of my actions?

Effective bullet points

- Must start with action verb (in the correct tense)
- No first person
- Key words from job description
- Evidence of your effectiveness
 - *Not just that you did something, but did it well*
- Specific projects and accomplishments
- Order by relevance to each specific job posting

Writing great bullet points

- “Tutored children”
- “Tutored two middle-school children in English and math, raising scores by at least two letter grades in each class”

Writing great bullet points

- “Organized store”
- “Ensured that storefront remained neat and tidy throughout high-volume shifts to attract and retain customers”

Writing great bullet points

- “Answered phones”
- “Managed multiple phone lines for a busy medical practice, maintaining efficiency and strong customer service”

Formatting Your Resume

STEP THREE

Say "no" to templates

PRAC Communication Calendar - Fall 2015 - Word



Info

New

Open

Save

Save As

Print

Share

Export

Close

Account

Options

New

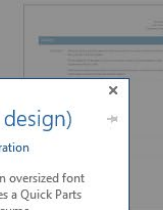
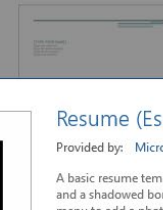
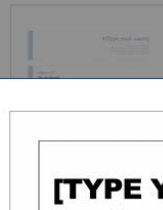
Home Resume



Resume



Basic resume



Resume (Equity theme)



Resume (Essential design)



Chronological resume...



Functional Resume



Resume (Median theme)



Resume for transfer with...



Chronological resume




Functional resume

Resume (Essential design)

Provided by: Microsoft Corporation

A basic resume template with an oversized font and a shadowed border; includes a Quick Parts menu to add a photo to your resume.

Download size: 303 KB



Create

[TYPE YOUR NAME]

[Type your e-mail]
[Type your address]
[Type your phone number]
[Type your website]

OBJECTIVES
[Type your objectives]

EDUCATION
[Type your school name]
[Type the completion date] [Type the degree]
• [Type list of accomplishments]

EXPERIENCE
[Type the company name] | [Type the company address]
[Type your job title] [Type the start date] – [Type the end date]
[Type job responsibilities]

SKILLS
• [Type list of skills]

SKILLS

SKILLS

Computer Programs: SPSS, Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)

Language: Spanish (conversational)

Laboratory: Pipetting techniques, DNA extraction and purification

Programming: Java, HTML

Additional: Familiarity with Associated Press style guide

*Transferrable/"soft" skills: leadership, organized, problem-solver, etc. Stronger to demonstrate through an action bullet point tied to specific experience

PROJECTS OR COURSES

Bachelor of Arts in Media and Communication

May 20XX

University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), Baltimore, MD

- Concentration in Journalism & New Media
- GPA:3.5
- ▪ Related Coursework: Advanced Composition, Public Relations Campaigns, Sales & Marketing, Magazine Publishing, Media Ethics, Literary Journalism

RELATED COURSEWORK

Advanced Composition

Date

UMBC, Baltimore, MD

- Edited 12 professional documents
- Wrote a series of five research papers based on business writing style

Sales & Marketing

Date

UMBC, Baltimore, MD

- Designed and implemented a marketing strategy for local non-profit organization by applying online networking tools
- Created presentation based on the effectiveness of visual displays
- Managed team of nine colleagues to carry out an online marketing project that raised \$8,000 for Race for the Cure

Keys to a good-looking resume

- Keep it to one page! Adjust font size (between 10.5-12 is OK) and margins (0.5" min.) if needed
- Use no more than 2 fonts
- Ensure that all tabs and bullets are aligned
- Ensure that bold, italics, all caps, etc. are used consistently

DID YOU CHECK FOR TYPOS??

Next steps

1. Review the Career Center's resume resources and sample resumes
2. Update your current resume and upload it to Handshake
3. If you haven't already, meet with a Career Advisor to review your resume

*Drop-in resume reviews Monday-Friday 2pm-4pm

Upload your resume

- Click “My Documents” from the homepage
- Click “Select from Computer”
- Upload and submit

The screenshot shows the Handshake career center interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Handshake', 'Jobs', 'Events', and 'Employers'. On the right, there is a user profile menu with options like 'My Profile', 'My Jobs', 'My Meetings', 'My Documents', 'My Career Interests', 'My Reviews', 'Notifications', 'Settings', 'Switch Users', 'Help', 'Terms of Service', and 'Log out'. The main content area features a large banner with the text 'The best way to get noticed by employers? Reach out.' and two call-to-action boxes: 'Attend an event' and 'Reply to Actalent'. Below the banner, the user's name 'University of Maryland, Baltimore County Career Center' is displayed. The 'Documents' section is highlighted, showing a 'Documents' header and a large circular graphic with a hand pointing to a document icon. Below this graphic, there is a message: 'You currently have any documents uploaded. Drag and drop PDF or Word doc here to add your first document.' and a blue button labeled 'Select from Computer'.

ATS: Applicant Tracking System

75% of applicants are disqualified by ATS software before a hiring manager reads their resume.



What is a Applicant Tracking System- Friendly Resume?



An ATS-friendly resume is designed to receive a thumbs up from a company's Applicant Tracking System.

Using an easy-to-read resume format, removing things like tables or images, and including resume keywords from the job description all help make your resume more ATS-friendly.

How to make an ATS-friendly resume?

Include job-related keywords

We are currently looking for a **self-motivated** and outgoing individual looking for a challenging opportunity to join our team as a Sales Associate. Our ideal candidate is a proven sales professional, accustomed to a longer sales cycle (3-9 months) with experience in commercial sales to **Property Managers**, **Facility Managers**, and **Industrial customers**. Individuals with a history of cradle-to-grave sales, from prospecting to closing, will find this a challenging and rewarding position with realistic, high-income potential. If you can relate to and are liked by the Maintenance Technicians and Executives at the same meeting, we have a great opportunity for you!

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Sales**
- **Marketing**
- **Business development**
- **Responding to and generating RFPs**
- **Account maintenance**
- **Relationship building**

How to make an *ATS-friendly* resume?

Use a Common Resume Font

Stick to basic fonts like Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, or Georgia

How to make an ATS-friendly resume?

Save your resume as a PDF

or .docx



Cover Letters

What's the difference between a resume and a cover letter?

Why write a cover letter?

- **Cover letters tell your story**
 - What are your career goals?
 - What is your background?
- **Cover letters show your passion and articulate your strengths**
 - What do you care about?
 - What are you good at?
- **Cover letters show your writing ability**

Cover letter format

- ONE page, not too crammed
- Same header and font as resume
- Date and salutation
- Paragraphs or bullets are okay

Sheena Jones
1234 Randolph Road, Silver Spring, MD 20902

Ms. Katherine Corr
Executive Director
Notre Dame Mission Volunteers AmeriCorps
5405 Loch Raven Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21239

August 19, 20xx

Dear Ms. Corr,

I am applying for the Administrative Assistant position at Notre Dame Mission Volunteer AmeriCorps (NDMVA) that was advertised on Idealist.org. My skills in meeting coordination, outreach, and communication make me a strong candidate for this position. Therefore, I am submitting my qualifications for review.

I thrive in positions that require planning and organizing. My ability to coordinate meetings and events was best demonstrated when I led a planning team, and later headed outreach, for two Social Change Projects (SCPs). As a team leader for the first SCP, I planned meeting agendas, directed meetings, composed and sent meeting minutes, and regularly followed up on progress toward completion of team tasks. For the second SCP, I was responsible for outreach to 12 organizations whose partnership was necessary to make the project's main event successful.

Communication is also one of my strengths. Because of my work experiences in customer service and as an Administrative Intern in a corporate office, I am adept at communicating with clients in person and via phone and e-mail. In addition, I helped present on the results of the first SCP for the directors and fellow staff of the organization for which I worked. Skillful communication would be necessary in order to carry out the Administrative Assistant's internal and external duties.

NDMVA interests me because its mission aligns with my career goal of enabling socioeconomic stability for communities through education and community development. I believe in proactively addressing illiteracy, and education deficits because such issues hinder the welfare and advancement of people who are already deprived. Therefore, I seek to provide logistical support to NDMVA's team as it takes holistic action against these issues. If hired as an AA, my aforementioned skills and experiences, plus my passion for social change, would be great assets.

Please feel free to contact me at jones.sheena@umbc.edu or (301) 123-4567.

Sincerely,
Sheena Jones

Cover letter content

PARAGRAPH 1:

- Full name of position and organization
- Where you heard about it
- The main skills, experiences, or qualities you want to highlight

Cover letter content

MIDDLE PARAGRAPHS:

- Delve into a few examples from your resume that highlight your top skills (themes from paragraph one)
- Show personality as appropriate
- Say why you're interested in this particular position AND this particular organization

*Don't (entirely) rehash your resume.
Tell stories.*

Cover letter content

LAST PARAGRAPH:

- Thank them for their time and/or consideration
- Restate your contact info (optional)
- Say when you'll follow up (optional)
- Sincerely, Your Name

Cover letter content

The interview gets you the job.
But your **resume and cover letter**
get you the chance to compete.

Where to Find Us

Website: careers.umbc.edu

Math & Psychology Building 201
1000 Hilltop Circle
Baltimore, MD 21250

Phone: 410.455.2216

Fax: 410.455.1075

Email: careers@umbc.edu

Email:

General Questions: careers@umbc.edu

Student Intern Questions: internships@umbc.edu

Asynchronous Resume Review: resumereviews@umbc.edu

WE are IN-PERSON and VIRTUAL !

In-Person Drop-ins:

Monday-Wednesday, 2pm-4pm

Virtual Express Appointments:

Tuesdays, 5pm – 7pm.

Thursday, 2-4

Friday, 2-4

Connect with Us

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

facebook

Follow us!



facebook.com/UMBCcareers

twitter.com/UMBCcareers

www.instagram.com/umbc/careers/



Events Tab for Workshops & Information Sessions

Follow us in MyUMBC



Read the Jobs-Internships and Events & Opportunities emails each week

Questions?