

CSM Resume Guidebook

Created by the Office of Student Success

Updated February 2023

The office of Student Success created this guidebook for students as an informational guide for building a resume. Below, you will find information and guidance on various components of your resume. While there are some basic rules for creating a resume (spelling, grammar), it is largely individualized. For assistance, please email studentsuccess@csm.edu.

Basic Resume Principles

1. **The purpose of your resume is to get you an interview.** Your experience comes from previous jobs, but also school, campus activities, volunteerism, etc. Showcasing your transferable skills is key, especially if they are skills that are explicitly stated in the job description.
2. **Your resume should be easy to scan in about 15-30 seconds.** Use bullet points instead of paragraphs, have easily distinguishable sections, use consistent styles and sizes, list your experiences chronologically.
3. **Your resume should be written with the reader in mind.** Your reader only knows what you tell them, so make sure to prioritize having concise, yet detailed action statements to showcase your unique experiences.
4. **Your resume is a work in progress.** You should have a PDF version and a word document version of your resume so you can continue to edit it as you gain more experience. Don't be afraid of making changes or adjustments based on the role you are applying for.

Resume Sections/Headings

Your unique experiences will impact which sections you choose to include on your resume. Adjust the order of your sections based on most to least relevant to your career. Typically, if you are a current student, you will see the education section listed first on your resume. Examples of other resume headings include:

Education	Volunteer Experience	Professional Development
Relevant Coursework	Campus Involvements	Research Experience
Work Experience	Leadership Experience	Technical Skills/Trainings
Relevant Experience	Certifications/Licenses	Honors and Awards

Action Statements

Your action statements allow employers to see what types of transferable skills and experiences you have already gained that you can bring to their organization. It's important to be as specific as possible here, otherwise you leave your experiences up to interpretation. Here are three components to consider when you are writing your action statements:

Action Verb	What You Did	Impact
A powerful and descriptive verb allows the employer to glance and understand what your responsibilities are	Clearly state your task, duty, or responsibility. Quantify if you can.	How and why did you do this? When? How often? What did you accomplish, what was the result?

Examples of before and after resume statements	
I'm a tutor.	Tutor approximately 10-15 college students in chemistry on a weekly basis to provide supplemental academic support
I answer a crisis hotline.	Provide crisis counseling to sexual assault survivors to give them immediate emotional support and refer to appropriate resources
I worked as a CNA in a rehab facility.	Assisted 20 residents with activities of daily living including helping with meals, transferring using assistive devices, bathing, dressing, and grooming
I filed paperwork and answered the phone at an office.	Performed administrative duties and front office coordination for a 15-person office

A few action word examples:

Acquire	Condense	Evaluate	Mentor	Prepare	Strengthen
Administer	Coordinate	Guide	Monitor	Process	Support
Assemble	Develop	Identify	Observe	Provide	Teach
Clarify	Direct	Implement	Operate	Repair	Train
Collect	Discover	Interact	Organize	Research	Translate
Communicate	Display	Lead	Overhaul	Resolve	
	Encourage	Manage	Perform	Strategize	

For a full list of action verb examples, please refer to the Student Success webpage on csm.edu.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- **When do I take high school activities off my resume?**
 - If you're still early in your college years, it's acceptable for you to list your high school honors, involvements, jobs, etc. Generally, once you have completed (or almost completed) a new level of education, your high school experiences become less relevant. Our advice: include what you felt shaped your skills and experience the most.
- **1 page or 2 pages?**
 - Typically, employers only look at resumes for a few seconds. If you can consolidate your most meaningful experiences onto one page, that's great. Think quality over quantity! Two pages is fine if your content is all relevant and beneficial for the employer to know. Regardless of how long your resume is, we recommend keeping a record of all your experiences on a separate document so you can always refer to them or include them for other positions.
- **Objective statement – do I need one or not?**
 - In today's job market, "objective" statements are not needed. They are seen as a bit outdated, and they can take up valuable space at the top of your resume. Often, your objective statement will be information you include in a cover letter or personal statement anyway, so it can also be seen as repetitive in your application.