

# Developing Your Résumé



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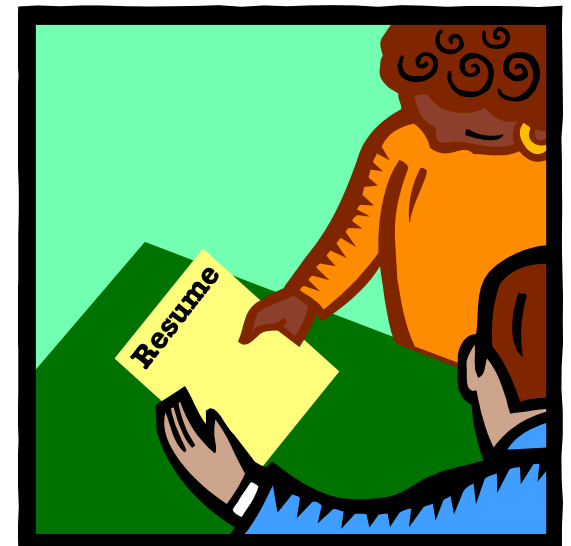
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## Overview of Sections

### Main Sections:

- The Objective Statement
- Contact Information
- Education
- Experience
- Honors and Activities
- Skills





The Objective Statement

## What is an Objective Statement?

- A **short section (usually 1-3 lines)**, often in the form of a sentence fragment, immediately below your contact information
- An **“at a glance” picture of you and your career interests**
- AKA: *Professional Objective, Résumé Capsule, Career Goals, etc.*



Why include an Objective Statement?

## The Objective Statement:

- **Emphasizes** key qualifications, skills, and/or goals
- **Helps** your readers find what they need quickly
- **Makes** a good first impression
- **Relates** company goals to personal goals





Is this a *Good* Objective Statement?

***Example: An internship allowing me to utilize my knowledge and expertise in different areas***

**Well-written but raises too many questions**

- What kind of internship?
- What knowledge?
- What kinds of expertise?
- Which areas?
- How will you contribute to this company?



## Crafting a Good Statement

**A good Objective Statement answers these questions:**

- What position(s) are you applying for?
- What are your main qualifications?
- What are your career goals?
- What is your professional identity?
- How can you help the company?

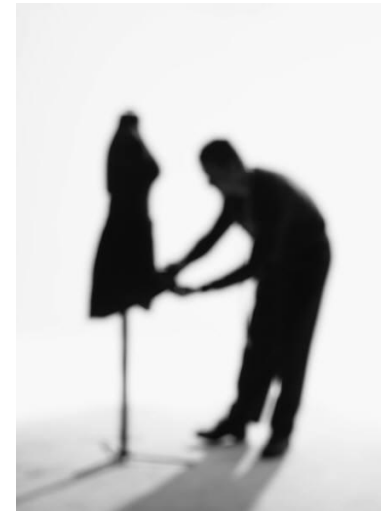




## The Importance of Tailoring

### **Sometimes one size does NOT fit all**

- Each person and employer is unique in certain ways
- **Aim for a custom fit when possible**





Getting started...

## Writing the Statement:

1. Reflect on your overall qualifications and career goals: In what ways are they typical? Unique?
2. Research individual employers in your field: In what ways are employers alike? Different?





## Brainstorm Activity

Questions about You	Questions about Employers
What are your main qualifications, strengths, skills, and areas of expertise?	What qualifications are most desired by employers in your field?
What position(s)—or type of position—are you seeking?	What positions are available on the job market? What are they titled?
What are some of your professional goals?	What are some goals of these organizations that interest you?
What type of organization or work setting are you most interested in?	What kinds of organizations are now hiring?



“Instant” objective  
statements

***For practice, fill in the brackets:***

1. To utilize my [qualifications, strengths, or skills] as a [position title]
2. A position as a [position title] for [company name] allowing me to develop my [qualifications, strengths, or skills]
3. An opportunity to [professional goal] in a [type of organization, work environment, or field]
4. [position title] with emphasis in [areas of expertise]



Which of your objective statements is “best”?

## The one that:

1. Emphasizes your qualifications and/or goals, and
2. Appeals to employer expectations



- You will probably need to *write more than one* objective statement.
- Tailor each statement for the type of position that interests you and, for best results, modify it for each individual employer as necessary.



The Contact  
Information Section

## **The Contact Information Section:**

- Provides information to help prospective employers contact you
- Presents a first impression
- Is usually located at the top of the page





What might you include?

## This Section Might Include **Your:**

- **Name**, of course!
- **Address and phone number**
  - Campus
  - Permanent
- **Email** address
- **Website**
- **Fax** number
- **Any other** modes of contact





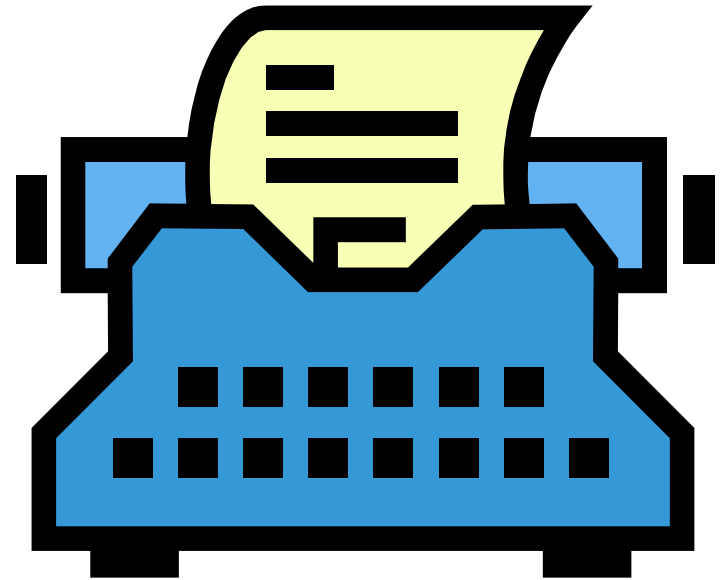
Q: Is this a good sample?

**Your Name Here**  
**1234 Streetname, #1**  
**West Lafayette, IN 47906**  
**Student@univ.edu**  
**765-555-5555**



Moving beyond the typewriter

- **Use design strategies**
- **Pick fonts, consider:**
  - Size,
  - Type, and
  - Highlighting
- **Use layout**
  - Alignment
  - Columns
- **Coordinate with the rest of the resume**





- Size: how big is big enough?
- Two major kinds of Type:
  - **Serif**
  - **Sans serif**
- Text highlighting: bold, italics, caps, underline, special effects

Font: Book Antiqua  
Font style: Regular  
Size: 11

Font color: Automatic    Underline style: (none)    Underline color: Automatic

Effects

<input type="checkbox"/> Strikethrough	<input type="checkbox"/> Shadow	<input type="checkbox"/> Small caps
<input type="checkbox"/> Double strikethrough	<input type="checkbox"/> Outline	<input type="checkbox"/> All caps
<input type="checkbox"/> Superscript	<input type="checkbox"/> Emboss	<input type="checkbox"/> Hidden
<input type="checkbox"/> Subscript	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrave	

Preview

Book Antiqua

This is a TrueType font. This font will be used on both printer and screen.

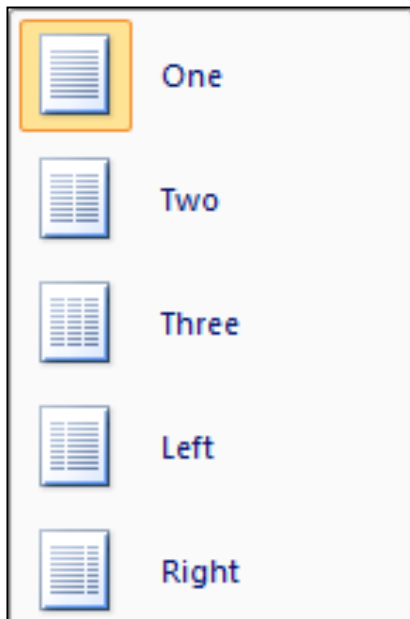
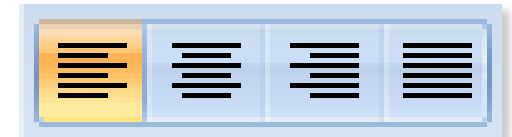




Layout: Putting it on the page

## Aligning text

1. Flush left
2. Center
3. Flush right



## Using columns

1. Both left and right
2. Left, right, and center



Q: Is this sample better?

## Your Name Here

Campus Address

1234 Streetname, #1

West Lafayette, IN 47906

*yourname@university.edu*

765-555-5555

Permanent Address

4321 Streetname

Anytown, IN 12345

*http://univ.edu/~login*

555-555-1234



Adding a graphic  
element

## **To set off your Contact Information you:**

- May include a horizontal line, and/or
- May possibly include a small graphic element





- **Match the design** of your Contact Information section **with the rest of your resume**
  - Use the same font types
  - Use a consistent layout
- **Match** the design **to your cover letter**
  - Make a stationary template based on your contact section
  - Use the same paper for all application documents
- **Aim for a professional package**



Proofread with a  
magnifying glass

- Triple-check for accuracy
- One typo could cost you an interview!





The Education Section

## What is the Education Section?

- A section that **emphasizes your educational background and formal training**, individualizing for an organization.
- Usually a major section for college students and recent graduates

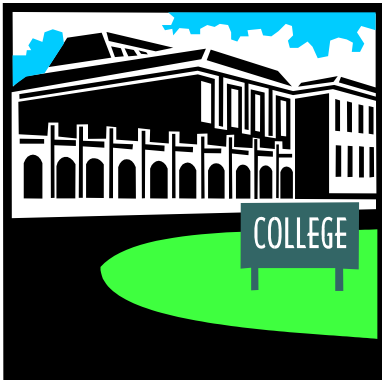




The Section's Purposes:  
to inform *and* persuade

## In the Education Section:

- Give **information** about your schooling and training
- **Persuade** employers your educational background is relevant to the job by providing evidence of your relevant qualifications
- Help your résumé **stand out** from the others





Where should you place this section?

## Should the Education Section be placed above or below your experience section?

- *Which is stronger, your education or your work experience section?*
- *How much relevant work experience do you have?*
- **Place the strongest, most relevant section closest to top of the page**





The “bare bones”  
Education Section

## The Basics:

1. The **schools you have attended**, including universities, community colleges, technical schools, etc.
2. The **location** of those school(s)
3. The **date of your graduation**, actual or anticipated
4. The **degree(s)** you earned or pursued (*ex. a B.A. in Marketing*)
5. Your Grade Point Average (**GPA**)
6. The **courses** you took outside of classes typical to your major **that may add to your qualifications** for the job



Are we done yet?

**Education:**

**B.A. in English**

**Purdue University**

**West Lafayette, Indiana**

**Graduation: December 2007**

**GPA: 3.4/4.0**

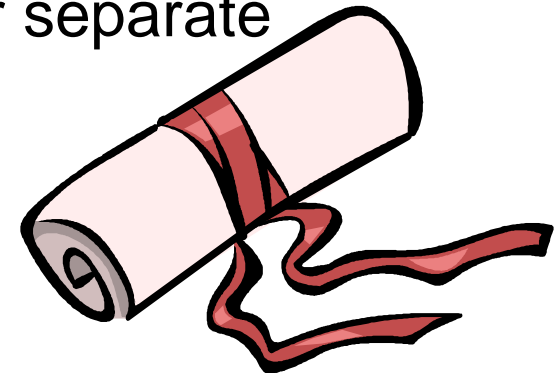


What else may be included?

**Extra information about your degree** (major, minor, or selective GPAs, funding sources, honors, etc.)—usually listed or included in parentheses

**Specializations and special projects**—usually listed or described briefly

**Other relevant skills and training** (relevant coursework, computer skills, language proficiency, certifications, licenses, etc.)—may be subsections or separate sections





Activity: Answer the following...

- What are my major(s) and minor(s)? What are my areas of emphasis, specialization, or concentration?
- What are my major and minor GPAs?
- Did I earn any honors related to my degree?
- How is my education funded?
- What special courses or degree-related projects might be relevant?
- What courses have I taken that are related to my career goals?
- With what computer programs am I most familiar?
- What language proficiencies do I have?
- Did I earn any certifications or licenses?
- Do I have any on-the-job educational training such as in-house training programs?



Design

## Consider using:

- Subheadings
- Indenting
- Columns/tables
- Parentheses
- Bulleted lists
- Paragraphs



Match the design of the Education Section to the rest of your résumé



Are we done *now*?

## Education

**B.A. in Professional Writing**, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana,  
May 2007 (Funded 100% of Schooling)

**Concentration:** Business and Technical Writing

**Select Coursework:** Computer-aided Publishing, Writing for the Computer Industry, Business Writing, Technical Writing, Advanced Professional Writing

**Overall GPA:** 3.4/4.0

**Major GPA:** 3.7/4.0



The Experience Section

## The Experience Section:

- Demonstrates your most relevant **experience in work or activities**.
- Other common names: *Professional Experience, Work History, Field Work, Volunteer Work, etc.*
- Special names: *Technical Experience, Supervisory Experience, Aviation Experience, etc.*





Informing to Persuade

- Provide information to **help persuade prospective employers that your experiences make you qualified for the job** and that you align with the organization's goals
- Help your résumé stand out from others in the stack
- Construct your professional identity







What goes in this section?

## Experience Entry Basics:

1. Company or organization and location (city, state)
2. Position title
3. Dates of employment or involvement
4. Descriptions of responsibilities, duties, achievements, etc.
  - Make sure to use *action verbs* to describe your duties! (ex. ***Planned annual fundraiser***)



Where should you put this section?

**Should the Experience Section be placed above or below your education section?**

- *How much work experience do you have?*
- *Which is stronger, your education or your work experience section?*
- **Place the strongest, most relevant section closest to top of the page**



Getting started...

## Activity: List your past and present experiences.

Include:

- Jobs
- Volunteer positions
- Appointments
- Assistantships
- Internships
- Any activities that involved the same duties or qualifications that might be needed in the job you're applying for





## **Activity (cont.):**

- To tailor the content of this section, circle each item that is...
  - Related to your career goals
  - Asked for in job ads and descriptions
- Then choose one experience you circled and describe briefly



Developing your  
descriptions

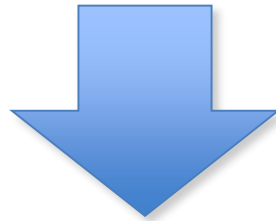
- **Use a variety of action words to describe your experiences**
- **Answer the journalistic questions:**
  - ***Who?** ...With whom did you work?*
  - ***What?** ...What duties did you perform?*
  - ***Where?** ...Where did your job fit into the organization?*
  - ***Why?** ...What goals were you trying to accomplish?*
  - ***When?** ...What timelines were you working under?*
  - ***How?** ...What procedures did you follow?*



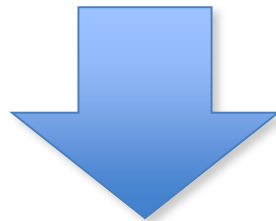


## Example:

**Description Before:** Planned activities



**Questions:** *What activities?, How?, When?, For whom?*



**Description After:** Planned arts, crafts, activities, and exercises weekly for physically-challenged children



Making your  
descriptions parallel

### **COLUMN A (not parallel)**

- Recording OSHA regulated documents
- Material purchasing and expediting
- Prepared weekly field payroll
- Responsible for charge orders

### **COLUMN B (parallel)**

- **Recorded** OSHA regulated documents
- **Conducted** material purchasing and expediting
- **Prepared** weekly payroll
- **Processed** charge orders



Try to see your experiences as a professional would



## **UNDERSTATED**

- Answered phone
- Wiped tables



## **PROFESSIONAL**

- Acted as liaison between clients and legal staff
- Created a healthy environment for customers and maintained a positive public image





## Ways to tailor the Experience Section

### **Remember to tailor your experience:**

- Select content that supports your qualifications and matches the job description
- Consider organizing by order of importance
- Use professional wording, integrating job-specific terms and verbs that are action-oriented





A formula for success

1. Tailor for your audience
2. Use appropriate headings
3. Included required content
4. Organize your section strategically
5. Develop your descriptions
6. Make your descriptions parallel
7. See through a potential employer's eyes





## The Honors and Activities Section:

- Emphasizes your **participation in relevant activities** and any **honors you have received**
- Other names: *Awards, Memberships, Volunteer Work, etc.*





Why bother?

## The Honors and Activities Section:

- Fills up white space
- Provides additional evidence of your qualifications
- Gives employers a sense of who you are outside of school and work





## Where should I place the Honors and Activities Section?

- Usually the last section on the page
- **Can be moved up if information is especially important or relevant**
- Sometimes omitted if there is a lack of space or relevant information



What goes into this  
Section?

## Activity:

Draw three columns, one for each of  
the following:

1. Titles or positions
2. Sponsors or affiliated organizations
3. Dates of involvement (M/Y-M/Y or Y-Y)





Exploring content possibilities

## Brainstorm...

- Extracurricular activities
- Awards, grants, prizes, and special honors
- Memberships in professional clubs and organization
- Volunteer activities





Big or little? Major or minor?

## Which Honors and Activities should I include?

- Consider which honors and activities are **most relevant to the job** to which you are applying.
  - Which honors and activities would **most interest prospective employers**?
- How much **space** do you have?
- Choose and organize your information to **emphasize the most relevant activities**.







Two approaches

## The Minimalist Approach

Photography Club, University of Illinois,  
January 1999-Present

## The Elaborated Approach

**President**, Photography Club, University of  
Illinois, January 1999-Present

- Organized campus-wide photography contest
- Increased membership with promotional efforts



Using visual design

## Design and Organization Options:

- Simple list
- Columns
- List with bulleted descriptions



Remember to **coordinate** your visual design **with the other sections** of your résumé!



## Plan of attack

1. Brainstorm
2. Decide what to include based on relevance, interest-value, and space
3. Match organization and design with rest of your résumé
4. Seek critical feedback





Where to Go to Get  
More Help

Purdue University Writing Lab  
Heavilon 226

Web: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

Phone: (765) 494-3723

Email: [owl@owl.english.purdue.edu](mailto:owl@owl.english.purdue.edu)



The End

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