



Where leaders are made

CAREER CENTER
Canisius College
2001 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14208

www.canisius.edu/careercenter

Phone: (716) 888-2475

Fax: (716) 888-3212

Resume Writing 101

What is a resume?

A resume is a **marketing document** intended to get you an interview – it is not intended to get you the job. It must capture your reader’s interest but it isn’t necessary or realistic to attempt to reveal **all** your abilities and background. **All the evidence in your resume must in some way help the reader to see that you have an ability to make a contribution to their organization.**

- **Three Main Types**

- Chronicle Resume. This format uses lists (education, experience, skills, activities); generally in **reverse chronological order** (most recent first). This is the most common resume among college students.
- Targeted Resume. This format can be used when you are applying for a very specific job. It requires thorough research of the job before writing the resume. This type of resume is for a person who considerable experience in the field.
- Functional Resume. This format is organized by functional categories (e.g., Supervision, Management, Research, Communication). Each category contains one or two paragraphs describing abilities and experience in that function. This resume is for people seeking mid-level positions rather than entry-level jobs.

All the evidence you include in your resume must in some way help the reader to see that you have an ability to make a contribution to their organization. **Be selective and specific** as you determine what evidence to include.

How to Prepare an Effective Resume

1. Assess Your Skills and Experiences to Prepare to Work

Before you begin writing it is important to do a self-assessment on paper. Think about everything you have accomplished. Be sure to remember education, skills and abilities, work experience, extra curricular activities and volunteer experience. This brainstorming will be beneficial when you begin writing.

2. Identify Your Purpose

Your purpose is acutely connected to the internship or job and career path you are pursuing. Your audience is potential employers and it is crucial to recognize their expectations of the ideal candidate. You must understand the skills, training and experience employers will want you to have in order to function successfully in a given position. The skills and knowledge necessary to be a benefits manager in a large manufacturing organization are not likely to be identical to the skills and knowledge necessary to be a trainer for a software vendor. As you develop a resume you must assess your background and present only those details which are evidence of your training and experience that are relevant to the position you are seeking and the employer who may hire you. So how do you accomplish this?

3. Research Your Audience

Research is vitally important as you decide what evidence to include in your resume in order to capture the attention of your audience. Do the necessary research to carefully assess the skills employers will require for the types of positions you are seeking. You can begin this process by using the wealth of resources available on the web. Read whatever you can find about career paths and be certain to look at a wide range of job postings to identify the usual skills, training and experience necessary for a particular type of position. In particular, read job postings at the websites of relevant professional organizations and conduct information interviews with individuals in the field.

4. Preparing the Content

When you draft, revise, and edit a resume, imagine you are the busy, distracted reader who is trying to find appropriate candidates from a large pool of applicants. Your reader knows little or nothing about you and is quickly comparing you to many other candidates. How can you help this person to focus on your resume? Create an excellent impression through crystal clear and sophisticated organization. As you edit and revise, ask yourself if you have fully and specifically explained your evidence under well-chosen headings and logical format. In particular focus on the following areas:

- **Contact Information** (name, address, telephone, e-mail address, web site address) should be placed at the top of your resume.
 - Avoid nicknames
 - Use a permanent address
 - Be sure to have a proper message on the answering machine of the phone number you included on your resume. This is the first impression an employer might have of you.
 - Choose an email address that sounds professional (cutiepie@aol.com is not appropriate).
- **Objective or Summary**
 - An **objective** tells potential employers the sort of work you are hoping to do. Be as specific as possible and let this statement guide you in creating the resume. Tailor your objective to each job that you are seeking.
 - A **summary** is a statement or list of statements highlighting skills that will be most valuable to the employer for the particular job (Note: This is a good place to include course highlights, computer skills and foreign languages etc.).
- **Education**

If you are still in school or you are a recent graduate your education should be placed at the top of your resume.

 - List your most recent educational information first.
 - Include your degree (A.S., B.S., B.A., etc.), major, institution attended, minor/concentration.
 - Add your GPA if it is higher than 3.0.
 - Mention academic honors.
- **Work Experience**

Describe the work that is taught you the skills necessary for the job you are applying. Use **action words** to describe your job duties (Note: There is a list of action words in the back of this guide). Remember that this section is also in reverse chronological order with the most recent job listed first. Below is a list of information to include.

 - Title of position
 - Name of organization
 - Location of work (town, state)
 - Dates of employment
 - Work responsibilities, **be specific!!!**
- **Other Information**

If you lack a great deal of work experience there are other ways to highlight your skills and abilities. Leadership in student activities, athletics and volunteer experiences are some examples of other

information that can be relevant. Give yourself credit for everything that you are involved with. You deserve it!

- **References**

Contact individuals to serve as references. Be sure they are willing and that they have a copy of your current resume. Do not include references on your resume. They are to be placed on a separate page. Please refer to the back of this handout for an example.

5. Check Your Work!

You have completed your resume. Now it's time to have it reviewed by the Career Center. You can also take the following steps to ensure quality:

- Content
 - **Spell check**
 - Ask a friend to review your grammar
 - Ask another friend to proofread. Remember, the more people that check it over the better!
- Design
 - Choose cream or white paper
 - Use 8-1/2-x 11-inch paper
 - Create an attractive heading including your name and contact information
 - Print on one side of the paper
 - Use a 10 to 12 point font
 - Use nondecorative typefaces (Suggested fonts: Garamond, Book Antiqua, Arial)
 - Choose one typeface and stick to it
 - Do not fold or staple your resume
 - Use no more than two or three special effects (bold, italics, underlining, etc.)
 - Use bulleted lists. Do not substitute dashes or asterisk for bullets
 - Leave one-inch margins at the top and left side at a minimum. You can sometimes cheat on the bottom and right margins - try using .75 or .50 in a pinch.

6. Reflection

Below are some questions to ask yourself after you have completed a rough draft. IS your resume meeting it's purpose as discussed earlier in the document?

- **Have you offered an objective?** The great debate on whether or not to include an objective has endured for years. While the final choice is one you must make for yourself, bear in mind that as you write your resume you must have a clear enough objective in your own mind to determine just what evidence is necessary for you to reach your goal. While you may decide to eliminate the objective after your writing process is complete, have a clear objective on paper during the process of writing this all-important marketing document.
- **Have you stressed your transferable skills?** This type of evidence can be presented under headings such as summary of qualifications or skills profile. Under this heading you might list computer skills, language skills, writing and research ability, leadership qualities, teamwork experience, time management skills, oral presentation skills, et cetera. Showcasing your transferable skills is what will help those who are new to an area to "break in." This is a key strategy for distinguishing a hybrid chronological resume from a traditional resume. Not everyone needs a summary of qualifications, but carefully consider whether it can be useful in your situation. Be certain that the summary is brief and that it conveys both soft skills (Excellent writing and presentation skills) and if possible evidence of specialized abilities or knowledge (Basic Knowledge of NYS labor laws, Fluent in Spanish, Experience with database management, etc.).
- **Have you clearly explained your educational training and background?** This type of evidence can be presented under headings such as Education, Education and Honors, Professional Development, et cetera. State clearly your degree and college. Note that those hiring interns and new grads can be sensitive to the significance of your quality point average, so if your QPA overall or in your major is noteworthy (usually a 3.0

out of 4.0 or better) consider including it in the education segment of your resume. If you are short on paid experience but have had significant and /or unique coursework consider including this as well under a heading such as course highlights. If you completed a major research project relevant to the position you seek you might also consider including it.

- **Have you clearly defined your relevant experience?** This type of evidence can be presented under headings such as professional experience, related experience, relevant experience, et cetera. Present your experience by specifically noting your job title, the organizations for which you have worked or volunteered, the dates of your service, etc. and do so in reverse chronology. If you have done extensive volunteer work, worthy of descriptions along the lines of that you would include in describing a paid position, you can consider including this under the experience segment of your resume – as long as it is clear you served in a volunteer capacity.

Resources for Researching Careers Jobs and Companies

General Self-Assessment and Career Exploration Links

- Career Zone www.nycareerzone.org/index.jsp/
- Occupational Outlook Handbook www.bls.gov/
- Richard Bolles Job Hunter's Bible www.jobhuntersbible.com/

Specialized Links: Arts, Non-Profits, Religious

- Art links www.allworth.com/Pages/links_new.htm
- Chronicle of Philanthropy <http://philanthropy.com/>
- College Art Association www.collegeart.org/
- Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo www.cfgb.org/
- ExecSearches.com www.execsearches.com/exec/default.asp
- Jobsgopublic www.execsearches.com/exec/default.asp
- Nonprofit Career Network www.nonprofitcareer.com/
- Opportunity Nocs.com www.opportunitynocs.org/
- Religious Careers www.churchstaffing.com/
- Music and Entertainment Careers www.sc.edu/career/music/music-web.html

Specialized Links: Business and Business Management

- American Management Association www.amanet.org/index.htm/
- Careers in Business www.careers-in-business.com
- Careers.org. www.careers.org/index.html
- Institute for Management and Administration www.ioma.com/
- The Riley Guide www.rileyguide.com/
- Wetfeet www.Wetfeet.com/
- Wall Street Journal Career Guide www.careerjournal.com/Default.asp

Specialized links: Liberal Arts

- Arts and Culture Programs www.fundsnetsservices.com/artsfoun.htm
- Directory of Museums www.musee-online.org/
- Entry Level Jobs www.entryleveljobs.com/

Specialized Links: Psychology, Human Resources and Industrial Organization

- American Psychological Association www.APA.org/
- American Society for Training & Development www.astd.org/
- Jobs4HR Professionals www.jobs4hr.com/
- Society for Applied Learning Technology www.salt.org
- Society for Human Resource Management www.shrm.org/

(In particular see Professional Emphasis Groups (PEGS))

- The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology www.siop.org/

Specialized Links: Advertising, Public Relations and Marketing

- Adage <http://adage.monster.com/>
- Buffalo Niagara Sales and Marketing Executives www.bnsme.org/index2.html
- Public Relations Society of America www.PRSA.org/
- Sales and Marketing Executives International www.smei.org/
- Council of American Survey Research Associations www.CASRO.org/

Job Search Links

- College Central.com www.collegecentral.com/canisius/
- Fortune 1000 Jobs www.worktree.com/index.cfm
- New York Job Search www.myjobsearch.com/career.html
- Career magazine www.careermag.com/

Resume Writing Resources

Internet Resources

- JobStar-Resumes <http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/index.cfm>
- Monster-Resumes <http://resume.monster.com/>
- QuintCareers--Career Toolkit <http://www.quintcareers.com>
- WetFeet-Resumes <http://www.wetfeet.com/>

Career Center Print Resources

- Adams Resume Almanac
- From College to Career: Entry-Level Resumes for Any Major
- Resume Magic
- The Resume Catalog: 200 Damn Good Examples

Sample Resumes

In the remainder of the handout you will find:

- List of action words (great for describing job and co-curricular accomplishments)
- Sample resumes
- Sample Reference Sheet

The samples are to be used only as a reference. Please let your resume reflect your individuality.

Below is a list of **RESUME ACTION WORDS** that can be used to highlight accomplishments. They have been broken down into categories to help you locate suitable words for your needs.

Analytical	Management	Counseling	Speaking
Analyzed	Administered	Advocated	Addressed
Anticipated	Approved	Arbitrated	Arbitrated
Appraised	Arranged	Coached	Convinced
Assessed	Attained	Clarified	Demonstrated
Clarified	Chaired	Consulted	Informed
Compiled	Consolidated	Counseled	Lectured
Conceptualized	Contracted	Diagnosed	Litigated
Diagnosed	Coordinated	Facilitated	Marketed
Evaluated	Delegated	Guided	Pioneered
Examined	Directed	Interviewed	Moderated
Formulated	Enlisted	Listened	Presented
Interpreted	Expedited	Mediated	Performed
Review	Evaluated	Negotiated	Spoke
	Executed	Referred	Translated
Enterprising	Formulated	Rehabilitated	Reported
Achieved	Improved	Resolved	Represented
Conceptualized	Increased	Represented	
Created	Influenced	Solved	Technical
Customized	Instituted		Assembled
Designed	Integrated	Research/Writing	Built
Established	Handled	Authored	Computed
Founded	Led	Catalogued	Designed
Generated	Motivated	Clarified	Engineered
Initiated	Organized	Classified	Fabricated
Implemented	Oversaw	Collaborated	Inspected
Introduced	Planned	Collected	Maintained
Invented	Prioritized	Compiled	Operated
Marketed	Produced	Corresponded	Overhauled
Originated	Promoted	Critiqued	Programmed
Persuaded	Reduced	Developed	Remolded
Publicized	Recommended	Drafted	Repaired
Recruited	Resolved	Edited	Upgrades
	Reviewed	Examined	
Financial	Revitalized	Identified	
Allocated	Scheduled	Illustrated	
Analyzed	Shaped	Interpreted	
Appraised	Spearheaded	Investigated	
Audited	Strengthened	Organized	
Balanced	Supervised	Researched	
Budgeted	Taught	Reviewed	
Calculated	Trained	Translated	
Computed		Summarized	
Developed		Systemized	
Forecasted		Wrote	
Projected			

Finance Major Sample

Jamie Jones

2001 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14208
716-888-2475

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Strong analytical and numerical abilities
- Detail oriented, team player
- Meet deadlines, strong on follow up
- Course Highlights: Regional Economics, Managerial Policy and Strategy, Finance and Economic Commerce, Financial Institutions and Markets

EDUCATION

CANISIUS COLLEGE, Buffalo, NY
Bachelor of Science in Finance: Major GPA 3.10/4.00 May 2004

ERIE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, Buffalo, NY
Associate Degree in Communication: Major GPA 3.55/4.0 May 2001

EMPLOYMENT

CANISIUS COLLEGE, Buffalo, NY
Teaching Assistant/Tutor in Accounting and Economics Fall 2002 - present

- Tutor students in accounting and economics
- Assist professor in Intermediate Economics class
- Administer and grade exams and group projects
- Facilitate study groups

BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO, Buffalo, NY
Assistant Manager June 1999 – June 2002

- Balanced daily totals to be reported to manager
- Handled customer grievances
- Organized incoming stock
- Revitalized employee code of conduct

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Finance Club, Canisius College
Secretary Academic Year 2003

- Recorded accurate meeting minutes
- Handled all club correspondence
- Revised constitution

Ultimate Frisbee, Erie Community College
Member Academic Year 2000

- Travel with team to local institutions for games
- Helped create a sense of team spirit

English Major Sample Resume

Jamie Jones

2001 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14208
(716) 888-2475

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Excellent oral and written communication skills
 - Four years editing experience
 - Completely bilingual in English and Spanish; some knowledge of French
 - Experienced in the general planning and detailed execution of projects
 - Calm under pressure; meet deadlines; strong follow-up
-

EDUCATION

CANISIUS COLLEGE, Buffalo, NY

B.A., English, cum laude, May 2004

- Di Gamma Honors Society
- Distinguished Senior Award 2004

COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

Art Voice

Movie Critic

Spring 2002-present

Team member of free publication serving the greater Buffalo area. Gained valuable experience in critiquing movies for public viewing. Articles submitted on a weekly basis to be approved by executive editor.

The Griffin, College Newspaper

Fall 2000-present

Editor (from Fall 2002), **Treasurer**

Primary campus newspaper reaching a student population of 3,500. Responsible for composing magazine budget and arranging specifications with printers. Managing the work progress of representatives from 7 sections including Life & Arts, Opinion, News and Sports.

Great Books Club

Member

Fall 2000-Fall 2003

Student book club created to facilitate discussion on popular novels and publications. Chaired fundraiser for the 2001 academic year to provide guest speakers and refreshments for special Book Club events.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Talking Leaves Bookstore, Buffalo, NY

Sales Associate

Fall 2003-present

Popular local bookstore in the Buffalo community. Aided customers in the process of selecting and locating books of interest. Served as an important resource for a variety of genres. Further developed customer service skills and handled customer grievances.

Wegmans Food Market, Buffalo, NY

Stockroom Manager

Spring 1998-Fall 2000

Managed inventory for produce section of large grocery store. Responsible for all stockroom operations including stock, ordering and staffing.

Dual Major Sample Resume

Jamie Jones

2001 Main Street • Buffalo, New York • 14208 • 716-888-2475 • CanisiusCollege.edu

Objective: A summer position in banking

Summary of Qualifications

- Excellent work ethic, punctual and reliable
- Computer literate: Experienced user of Microsoft Word and the Internet
- Highly motivated, positive attitude
- **Strong interpersonal and customer service skills**
- **Outstanding writing skills**

Education

Dual Degree: English & Business
Canisius College, Buffalo, New York

Expected May 2004

Work Experience

Verizon Wireless, Buffalo, New York 14214

Clerical Assistant, Part time,

2000 to Present

- Answer phones
- Assist with verifying customer charges and receipts
- Write routine correspondence

Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo, New York

Tour Guide,

Summers 2000-2002

- Responsible for educating visitors to museum
- Provided information and introduction to two special exhibits including Quilt Exhibit and Children's Interactive learning exhibits

Holiday Valley, Ellicottville, New York

Ski Coach,

Winter Break 1999 – 2001

- Taught skiing to children ages 7-12
- Provided instruction for beginners to intermediate focusing on technical skills and pleasure of the sport as well as motivation and self-confidence

Volunteer Experience

Monthly Volunteer, Various Soup Kitchens, Campus Ministry, Canisius College

Athletics

Member, Canisius College Women's Lacrosse Team, 2002 to Present.

Psychology Major Sample

Jamie Jones

2001 Main Street ♦ Buffalo, New York 14208 ♦ (716) 888-2475 ♦ jonesneedsajob@work.com

OBJECTIVE

Seeking an internship in the Human Resources Management field.

QUALIFICATIONS

- ♦ Course highlights: Industrial/Organizational Psychology , Social Psychology, Business Communications
- ♦ Strong interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills
- ♦ Strong organizational and leadership skills
- ♦ Ability to lead and work in teams while managing multiple projects
- ♦ Experienced in the use of Microsoft Word 98, Excel 5.0, Power Point, PHStat 97, and the Internet

EDUCATION

Canisius College, Buffalo New York

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology May 2005

Industrial/Organizational Psychology Minor

- ♦ Member of Psi Chi (Psychology National Honor Society)

EXPERIENCE

The Original Pancake House, Williamsville, New York 14221

Hostess/Customer Service Representative, June 1999- Present

- ♦ Address customers questions and concerns
- ♦ Record and monitor monetary transactions

G.T. Custom Built Homes,

Part Time Office Manager, August 1999- Present

- ♦ Show model homes to potential buyers
- ♦ Assist in payroll processing

The Boys and Girls Club of the Tonawanda's, Tonawanda, New York 14150

Education Coordinator, June 1996 - August 2000

- ♦ Planned and implemented activities
- ♦ Assisted in rewriting job descriptions

North Tonawanda High School PASS Program, North Tonawanda, New York 14120

Mentor, September 2000 - May 2001

- ♦ Advise students who are at risk of failing academic studies

ACTIVITIES

Society of Human Resource Management, Student Chapter, 2001-Present

Appalachia Project, Canisius College Campus Ministry, Spring 2002

Reference Sample

Jamie Jones

2001 Main Street ♦ Buffalo, New York 14208 ♦ (716) 888-2475 ♦ jonesneedsajob@work.com

References

Dr. Judith Larkin

Professor of Psychology
Canisius College
2001 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14208
716-888-2508
larkin@canisius.edu

Dr. Gordon W Meyer

Associate Professor Management & Marketing
Society of Human Resource Management Advisor
Canisius College
2001 Main Street
Buffalo, NY 14208
716-888-2634
meyerg@canisius.edu

Mr. Thomas Smith

Assistant Director
Boys and Girls Club of the Tonawanda's
111 Main Street
Tonawanda, NY 14220
716-555-1212
tomsmith@bgc.org