

# Resumes and Cover Letters



Academic Success  
and Career Center

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

# ELEMENTS OF A RESUME

## Heading

- Contact information: Your name, email address, phone number and LinkedIn profile URL. Do not provide information that employers have no legal right to such as age, sex, race, religion, marital-status, or sexual orientation.

**Example:** Madison Cougar  
[Madison.Cougar@wsu.edu](mailto:Madison.Cougar@wsu.edu)  
509.335.0000  
LinkedIn.com/ in/madisoncougar

## Skills Summary/Summary of Qualifications

- The skills summary tells the prospective employer your most sought-after skills, abilities, accomplishments, and attributes. This should be tailored to the position for which you are applying. Mirror key words in the job description.

## Education and Related Coursework

- Degrees earned
- Your major/minor areas of study
- College, city and state where located
- Month and year of graduation
- GPA/Class Rank (if above a 3.0).
- If you are a member of the honors college, on the Dean's List, attended any special programs, elective coursework, trainings, courses, or participated in study abroad, you can also list them in this section. List in reverse chronological order with most recent experience first.

**Example:** Washington State University                      Pullman, WA  
Bachelor of Arts, Psychology                      Expected May 2022  
GPA 3.5

## Related Work/Internship/Practicum Experience

- Position title, the organization's name, city and state where located, when and how long you worked there, and what you accomplished while you worked there. Don't just list, your responsibilities, write about what your unique skill set and personality enabled you to accomplish. Describe your experiences in a way that highlights on the skills & abilities acquired, how you contributed to a team, or how you went above and beyond. Quantify your descriptions (how many people you managed, how much money you handled, workload, etc.) when possible.

## Leadership

- Use this section to highlight any leadership roles you have held both in and out of school. This can include offices held, projects led, groups led, etc. Describe the skills you have as an effective leader. Quantify your accomplishments (number of people you led, number of projects you were in charge of, etc.) to demonstrate the scope of your responsibility.

## Professional Development/Certifications

- Highlight additional training and certificate actions relevant to the position. This includes conferences, workshops, and seminars attended, as well as certifications or licensure.

## Publications

- Use this section to list any abstracts or articles you have had published during your education.

## Honors/Awards

- List any honors, scholarships, honorary organizations and awards received (both academic and non-academic related).

## Clubs/Organizations

- List any clubs or organizations in which you are an active member. Describe your role and the length of time you were involved.

## Volunteer/Community Service

- List your role and contributions to various organizations within your community.

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## How to write the accomplishment statements?

- **WHAT** - explain your responsibilities briefly.
- **HOW** - with action words describe your tasks, how you contributed to the team or what skill set and personality enabled you to complete them. (refer page 4)
- **RESULT** - how did it affect the organization or what you accomplished. (Quantify: how many people you were in charge of, how much money you handled, etc. and qualify accomplishments).

**\*The shorter, the more concise, the better.**

## GENERATE A LIST OF YOUR SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

Employers want to know what you have achieved in past jobs to see how you can contribute to their organization. Use this page to compose your skills summary and related work sections with strong and detailed statements. Be specific and descriptive about your experience.

### Use the acronym **APR** (Action + Problem/Project + Results):

**A**ction – Choose an action verb that describes your work

**P**roblem (or Project) – Think of a project you completed or problem you solved.

**R**esults – Results you achieved – quantify wherever possible.

### Ask the following questions to compose your own accomplishment statements:

What did you do that

- Was faster, better, less expensive?
- Increased membership/participation/sales?
- Saved your organization time, money, or eliminate waste?
- Identified and/or helped solve problems?
- Suggested a new service, product, or project?
- Re-organized or improved an existing system?
- Maintained a consistently high level of performance?
- Demonstrated leadership skills and exhibit good team player skills?
- Achieved results with little or no supervision?
- Accomplished something others thought could not be done?
- Involved in coordinating an event or project?
- Required training another person?
- Acquired industry-specific knowledge?

### Important aspects of resume writing:

- Focus on starting your accomplishment statements with strong **action verbs**. These action words will provide powerful examples of your skills and experience.
  - DON'T: Jane Doe is an excellent wedding planner and never went over budget.
  - DO: Managed numerous small and large events, always staying within budget.
- Do not use complete sentences! The shorter, more concise, the better. **Bullet points are preferred!**
- **Quantify** as much as you can! For example : Coordinated + 3 fund raising events for local shelters +which raised more than \$8,000 (20% over goal) and greatly improved community awareness. How many, how much, how often? This helps you demonstrate your value to the company. Prove you can get the job done faster, better, or most cost effective.
- Remember to use **present tense** for current experience and past tense for prior experience.
- Always include **start date** and **end date** when describing past work experience.

### Examples: Key phrases for powerful resume statements

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- First-hand experience with a wide range of cultures.
- Skilled a developing rapport with all types of people.
- Able to resolve conflicts in a diplomatic manner.
- Effective working independently and as a member of a team.
- Highly motivated and goal oriented.
- Diplomatic and tactful with both professionals and nonprofessionals.
- Poised and competent as a professional representative.
- Enthusiastic, creative, and willing to assume increased responsibility.
- Effective in developing programs which reach goals.

## CHOOSE ACTION WORDS CAPTURING YOUR PAST CAREER EXPERIENCES

Action Words - Use powerful, skill-based action verbs to start bullet points on your resume.

Communication Skills		Management Skills	Clerical/ Detailed Skills	Teaching skills
Addressed	Consulted	Administered	Approved	Adapted
Corresponded	Translated	Assigned	Arranged	Advised
Directed	Summarized	Consolidated	Classified	Coached
Drafted	Interacted	Coordinated	Collected	Communicated
Enlisted	Formulated	Delegated	Compiled	Developed
Influenced	Collaborated	Executed	Dispatched	Enabled
Interpreted	Officiated	Improved	Monitored	Encouraged
Mediated	Proposed	Organized	Prepared	Evaluated
Moderated	Participated	Oversaw	Processed	Explained
Motivated	Observed	Prioritized	Purchased	Informed
Negotiated	Reported	Produced	Recorded	Initiated
Promoted	Marketed	Recommended	Retrieved	Instructed
Publicized	Recruited	Strengthened	Specified	Persuaded
		Supervised	Validated	Stimulated
				Trained
Research skills		Technical skills		Helping skills
Collected	Integrated	Assembled	Coded	Assessed
Diagnosed	Justified	Built	Applied	Assisted
Examined	Reported	Calculated	Constructed	Clarified
Extracted	Substantiated	Designed	Devised	Coached
Identified	Tested	Engineered	Installed	Counseled
Inspected	Formulated	Fabricated	Utilized	Demonstrated
Interpreted	Estimated	Maintained	Remodeled	Diagnosed
Interviewed	Deciphered	Operated	Replaced	Educated
Investigated	Detected	Overhauled	Transmitted	Expedited
Organized	Formulated	Programmed	Applied	Facilitated
Reviewed	Gathered	Remodeled	Solved	Familiarized
Summarized	Evaluated	Repaired	Upgraded	Guided
Surveyed	Systematized			Referred
				Rehabilitated
Financial Skills		Creative skills		Accomplishments
Allocated	Projected	Acted	Performed	Accelerated
Analyzed	Researched	Created	Planned	Maximized
Appraised	Adjusted	Designed	Revitalized	Enhanced
Audited	Compared	Established	Shaped	Pioneered
Balanced	Quantified	Illustrated	Modeled	Surpassed
Budgeted	Reduced	Instituted	Visualized	Achieved
Calculated	Measured	Integrated	Displayed	Boosted
Computed	Devised	Introduced	Developed	Transformed
Forecasted	Estimated	Originated	Composed	Succeeded
	Planned	Conceptualized	Improvised	Spearheaded
				Reduced (problems)
				Resolved

# NACE Career readiness Competencies (Non-technical skills)

Continuous research done by NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND EMPLOYERS shows that the following skills are preferred by employers more than the technical skills of potential employees.

Incorporate these in the skills or work experience section of your Resume or in your cover letter.

## 1. Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving



- Objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgement.
- This skill shows employers that you are able to make logical and informed decisions free from influence and based on factual information on behalf of your company or industry.

## 2. Oral/ Written Communication



- Transfer of information from sender to receiver by means of verbal and visual aid. Body language, clarity, pitch, tone, eye contact, completeness, correctness, and detail are all important aspects of oral and written communication.
- Examples are presentations, speeches, discussions, letters, memos, emails, reports, and research papers.

## 3. Teamwork/ Collaboration



- Collective effort of a group of interdependent individuals working together to successfully achieve a common goal.
- Healthy dynamics, conflict resolution, shared leadership, and open communication are critical to cohesive teamwork and collaboration

## 4. Information Technology Application



- Knowledge and experience with applications that produce, manipulate, store, communicate and/or disseminate information. These are designed to carry out tasks and functions for the assistance of the user.
- Examples include word processors, database programs, web browsers, drawing/imaging programs, spreadsheets, and photo editing software.

## 5. Leadership



- The ability to motivate a group of people to cohesively reach a common goal.
- Each leader has their own style, but many good leaders possess qualities such as creativity, innovation, accountability, honesty, integrity, good decision-making skills, and commitment, is a good communicator, inspires others, and is able to delegate.

## 6. Professionalism/Work Ethic



- How you conduct yourself within your industry. Professional employees have a well-groomed appearance, confident demeanor, are reliable, competent, poised, courteous, organized, accountable, respectful, and polite.
- In addition, a good work ethic entails integrity, discipline, a sense of teamwork and responsibility and showing pride in work

## 7. Career Management



- Conscious planning and management of your own professional career. This is shaped by developing goals and objectives, a general strategies to accomplish your goals, ways to implement those strategies, and systematic evaluations of your progress.

## 8. Global/Intercultural Fluency



- The ability to successfully operate and communicate within different cultural contexts.
- As the workplace is becoming increasingly globalized, being able to operate and communicate within a multicultural context is an invaluable skills

# BUILD YOUR RESUME

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## Full Name

City, State | Phone Number

• Email Address •

LinkedIn URL

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### OBJECTIVE (Optional)

Briefly state the position you are looking for, the relevant skills you possess that you would utilize for the job.

### EDUCATION

Degree, certification or diploma received

Month and year of graduation

Name of institution

City and State

Optional information: Relevant Coursework names (not numbers of courses), GPA, Certifications (if applicable to the position or field), study abroad – (list in reverse chronological order)

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### RELATED EXPERIENCE

*Role title | organization name*

Month and year

Bullet points with details

City and state

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### OTHER EXPERIENCE

(Can include volunteer, leadership experience, projects, presentations, clinical/shadowing experience)

*Role title | organization name*

Month and year

Bullet points with details

City and state

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### ADDITIONAL SKILLS

(Soft skills, Technical skills, Computer programming skills, languages and fluency)

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### CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

*Position held | organization name*

Bullet points with details of task.

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### AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Add academic honors, awards, scholarships, extra-curricular excellence.

# SAMPLE ENTRY LEVEL RESUME

## BUTCH T. COUGAR

509-335-6000 • [cougar@wsu.edu](mailto:cougar@wsu.edu) • [www.linkedin.com/butchtcougar](http://www.linkedin.com/butchtcougar)

### EDUCATION

#### **Bachelor of Arts in Communication**

Washington State University

- GPA 3.9

December 2023

*Pullman, WA*

#### **High School Diploma**

*Pullman High School*

- GPA 3.1, 15 credits fine arts and creative writing classes

June 2018

*Pullman, WA*

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### EXPERIENCE

#### **Class Work Example**

**Student**, Biology 10

Pullman High School

- Organized study group visit to local plant museum to research local grass species.
- Composed paper with group of 3 class members which earned a grade of 92%.

November-December 20121

*Pullman, WA*

#### **Work Team Member**

*XYZ Farms*

- Contribute to household income by picking strawberries and harvesting lavender for farm in 4 different locations.
- Demonstrate efficiency and strong work ethic by working 8 hour days 6 days a week, and meeting 100% of business harvesting goals.

Summers 2021– Present

*Sequim, WA*

#### **Child Care Provider**

*Anderson, Cook, Martinez Families*

- Organize educational and social activities for 4 children ages 3 -6 years after school.
- Develop positive relationships and communication with parents about children's daily activities.

September 2021 – Present

*Pullman, WA*

#### **Soccer Team Member**

*Palouse Soccer League*

- Participate in 4 weekly practices and 6 competitions, team placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in local League.
- Provide transportation for team members to and from practices and games.

September 2020- Present

*Pullman, WA*



# SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

# NAME

Phone number

Email

LinkedIn URL

## **OBJECTIVE**

A trainee position leading to Branch Management/Operations for a major financial services organization

## **LEADERSHIP**

- President, **Finance Club** 2020-2020
- Vice President, **BetaSigmaEpsilon** 2021-2022

## **CLUBS**

- Member, Finance Club 2019-2020
- Member, Business Administration Club 2019-2022

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

- Donald Gates Outstanding Leader Scholarship 2020
- WSU Writing Portfolio Passed with Distinction 2020

## **EDUCATION**

### **Washington State University**

Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, May 2023  
- Minor in Finance  
- GPA 3.75

### **Relevant Coursework**

Financial Institutions and Markets, Commercial Bank Management, Advanced Financial Management, Investments and Security Analysis, Portfolio Theory and Management, Operations Management, Database Management Systems, Professional and Technical Writing

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

Financed 100% of higher education costs through the following part-time and summer jobs:

### **Resident Assistant | Sigma PI** *May 2019 – Present* Washington State University *Pullman, WA*

- Work with a staff of four resident assistants in an 88-student, freshman dormitory
- Create, plan and implement academic, cultural and social activities with the students
- Encourage and facilitate discussion of social, political and ethical questions among the students
- Build community spirit and guide residents in assuming responsibility
- Schedule performances, organize the budget and create publicity

### **Managing Editor | Daily Evergreen** *September 2020 -Present* Washington State University *Pullman, WA*

- Supervise a staff of 35 people, maintaining the lowest turnover rate in five years
- Coordinate editorial and art production schedules, oversee budget and recommend
- Developed a training program for new employees resulting in increased productivity
- Recruited student journalists, assigned weekly articles and conducted final edits.

# SAMPLE SCIENCE RESUME

**NAME**

EMAIL/LINKEDIN URL

ADDRESS

PHONE

## QUALIFICATIONS

Five semesters working in a commercial and academic biological research Lab. Proficiency with Electrophoresis, media preparation, team work and problem solving skills.

## EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Biology **May 2023**  
Washington State University  
Members of Honors College, GPA : 3.7  
Study Abroad at University of Lancaster, England **Spring 2021**

## LABORATORY SKILLS

Radioimmunoassay, Microscopy, Agarose Gel Electrophoresis, Media Preparation, Animal Injections (chickens), Spectroscopy, Lotus 1-2-3 Software, Macintosh Computer

## RESEARCH

Hypothyroidism in male chickens: Investigated the effects **May 2021**  
injections of thyroid hormone and drugs that inhibit thyroid hormone production had on body weight and bone growth replacement

- Proficient at IM injections for chickens
- Ran 80 blood samples through gas chromatograph to check T1 levels
- Prepared bone growth media for 8 sets of experiments

## EXPERIENCE

**Earned \$10,000 towards education through employment**  
**Laboratory Assistant** **Pullman, WA**  
Washington State University **Aug 2020 - May 2021**

- Assisted students with weekly lab projects and answered student questions
- Prepared gel electrophoresis equipment for
- 10 students
- Arranged tutoring circles for students who scored low on exams

**Moisture Analyst, Quality Assurance Dept** **Allentown, PA**  
ALPO Petfoods, Inc **Summer 2021**

- Measured moisture and physical constants of newly produced dog food and adjusted content when necessary so variables remained within specified parameters
- Trained on and became proficient with Electronic Moisture Analyzer  
Calibrated moisture injection equipment

**Preparation Room Attendant** **Pullman, WA**  
Washington State University **Fall 2022**

- developed various laboratory courses
- Prepared solutions and media and performed autoclaving

## HONORS

- Treasurer, Mortar Board, August 2020 - May 2021
- Dean's List, fall 2021, spring 2022, Fall 2022

# SAMPLE TECHNICAL RESUME

NAME

ADDRESS  
PHONE

LINKEDIN URL

EMAIL

## Languages:

- Visual Basic
- COBOL
- C, C ++
- Pascal

## Operating Systems

- Windows (all versions)
- Mac OS
- UNIX

## Applications

- Microsoft Office
- Adobe PageMaker
- Adobe Photo Shop
- Corel DRAW

## Networking

- Ethernet card installation
- TCP/IP
- Telnet
- FTP
- Fetch

## Database

- SQL
- Microsoft Access
- Oracle8

## Web Development

- HTML
- Microsoft FrontPage
- Macromedia Dreamweaver
- ASP Programming

## EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration, May 2023  
**Emphasis:** Management Information Systems  
Washington State University, Pullman, WA

## EXPERIENCE:

**Web Coordinator, Student Computing Services** 8/2019 – 5/2020

- Created and maintained public and internal website
- Worked with other departments as a team member
- Installed and maintained NT server

**Lab Monitor, Student Computing Services** 8/2020 – 5/2021

- Created user accounts with Novell Network
- Helped customers regarding software or hardware, providing optimum customer service

## OTHER EXPERIENCE:

**Food Service Handler,** Pullman, WA  
**Compton Union Building** 8/2018 – 5/2019

- Performed multiple tasks simultaneously such as order taking, making change for many customers, providing beverages and dispensing orders
- Managed inventory and ensured food was stocked and in designated area

**Food Service Handler** Pullman, WA  
**Regent Dining Center** 8/2019 – 5/2020

- Maintained a courteous demeanor when greeting and serving customers.
- Prepared various foods in compliance to regulations and sustained an orderly and safe work environment.

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**Construction Volunteer** 8/2018 – 5/2019  
**Community Action center House Rehabilitation Program**  
Pullman, WA

- Led a team of four volunteers in repairing interior finish work in homes.
- Assisted with repair and improvement of owner-occupied homes.

**Peer Advisor** 8/2020 – 5/2021  
**College of Business & Economics** Pullman, WA

- Provided academic advising and support to student advisees
- Acted as role model and promoted responsible behavior to advisees
- Participated in extensive training in listening skills and advising issues

# CHOOSE REFERENCES AND ASK THEIR PERMISSION TO LIST THEM

## SAMPLE REFERENCE LIST

Your Name Here

Phone  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_@wsu.edu

Address  
City, State Zip Code

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Name of Reference Person  
Job Title  
Address (include zip)  
Phone (include area code)  
E-mail address  
Relationship to you (optional)

Name of Reference Person  
Job Title  
Address (include zip)  
Phone (include area code)  
E-mail address  
Relationship to you (optional)

Name of Reference Person  
Job Title  
Address (include zip)  
Phone (include area code)  
E-mail address  
Relationship to you (optional)

### Note:

- List 3-6 references. Remember, you must ask your reference people, in advance, if they are willing to provide recommendations for you. Ask your references if they prefer you list both their home and/or work phone numbers.

## CREATE A COVER LETTER SPECIFIC TO THE JOB

### COVER LETTER FORMAT

**Address**  
**City, ST Zip Code**  
**Date**

**Name**  
**Title**  
**Company/Organization Name**  
**Address**  
**City, ST Zip Code**

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

#### **Opening Paragraph:**

- What is your intent in writing this letter?
- What position are you applying for and how did you learn about it?

Briefly introduce yourself, your major, and the degree anticipated. If you are aware of a specific opening, refer to it. If you are not aware of a specific position, state your area of interest. This paragraph can also be used to refer to the individual who recommended that you contact the organization, or other factors that prompted you to write. If possible, convey why you are interested in the organization and anything you know about their product or service.

#### **Second Paragraph:**

- What are your qualifications?
- Why do you want to work for this organization?
- What would you enjoy doing for them?
- Sell yourself and be brief. Whet the employer's appetite so that he/she will want to read your resume and schedule an interview.

Describe highlights from your background that would be of greatest interest to the organization. Focus on skills, activities, accomplishments, and past experience you can contribute to the organization and its work. If possible, demonstrate that you know something about the organization and industry/field. Use action verbs that describe relevant skills and expertise you can contribute. Mention specific knowledge you may have such as computer applications, foreign languages, lab techniques, writing and editing capabilities. You are attempting to create a match or "notion of fit" between the employer's hiring needs and your interests, experience, and skills.

#### **Third Paragraph:**

- What is your plan of action?
- Do you want to follow up with a phone call or do you want them to contact you?

Close your letter by stating that you would like to discuss employment opportunities or other information with the individual and that you will call to follow up on your letter. This demonstrates your initiative and follow-through and will help you maintain some control of your efforts.

Other points that can be made in the last paragraph:

- Express your willingness to provide additional information
- State a specific time when you will follow up by phone or email
- Let them know if and when you are going to visit their area
- Thank the person receiving your letter for their time and interest

Most importantly, remember to address the cover letter to a person. If you do not have a name, call the department or human resources to find out to whom your letter should be addressed. As a last resort, address your letter to the personnel manager, hiring manager, or recruiting representative.

Sincerely,  
Signature,  
Your First Name and Last Name.

## SAMPLE COVER LETTER

NAME  
123 Anywhere Street  
Pullman, WA 99163  
509-123-4567  
stillnschool.wsu.edu

February 18, 200X

Dr. Mark Green  
Owner  
Reno Lights Clinic  
1234 Casino Road  
Reno, NV 99999

Dear Dr. Green:

As a current third year student at Washington State University, I am flourishing in the College of Nursing program. Before beginning senior clinical practicum in August, I am interested in returning to a clinical setting and would like the opportunity to visit your practice and discuss the possibility of either summer employment or a senior internship.

I am a well-rounded student, recognized on the Dean's List and active in many extracurricular activities and clubs. Throughout nursing school, I have experienced many opportunities that foster teamwork, leadership, diagnostic skills, and problem solving. My studies have included courses such as pharmacology, pathophysiology, anatomy and physiology, psychiatric and mental health, chronic illness in adults, and laboratory values and analysis. In addition to my curriculum, I developed and implemented a thesis project on the positive effect of exercise on insulin levels in severe diabetics. At the end of the project, I presented the successful results at the state nursing convention in Seattle, WA and to the College of Nursing at Washington State University.

My past clinical experience includes two multi- doctor practices in which I fulfilled certified nursing technician duties. Beyond medical knowledge, I gained a great appreciation for a sound staff, teamwork, and respect in the work place. These experiences have shaped my work ethic and my definition of a successful practice. I also have a wide variety of experience working with obese and diabetic populations. My future career interests reflect my diverse background.

I will be in Reno during the third week of March and would like the chance to introduce myself in person and visit your practice. I can be reached at your convenience through the contact information listed above. I will follow up with a phone call during the first week in March. Thank you for taking the time to look over my resume. I look forward to hearing from you soon and meeting with you in March.

Sincerely,

*Still N. School*

Enc. Resume