Resume
Toolkit

6 Steps to Create a Powerful Resume

Step 1: First impressions

Understand how to create an effective resume.

Step 2: Resume at a Glance

Overview of all sections of a resume.

Step 3: What to put in your resume

Create a resume that convinces the employer you are a good match for the job.

3.1 Resume Headings
3.2 Technical Skills or Key Competencies Section
3.3 Education Section
3.4 Relevant Work Experience Section
3.5 Project Experience Section
3.6 Interests Section

Step 4: Describe your experiences

Use accomplishment statements to show your experience in a way that impresses employers.

Step 5: Optional content and sections

Tailor your resume to the industry you are applying to, based on your own unique experiences.

Step 6: Personalize your resume

Make your resume unique to you.

Resources

Resume Template, Examples, Tranferable Skills List, Checklist

STEP 1
First impressions

6 seconds.

That is the average time a prospective employer will spend looking at your resume, if you even make it to a real human. Many of the large companies are employing Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) or 'Resume Bots' to cull their substantial applicant pools down to only the top 25% before forwarding them to an actual person.

This toolkit is designed to help you create a resume that will catch an employer's attention, beat the 'bots', and secure a highly sought-after interview!

Creating an effective resume involves a two-step process:

1. Analyzing the job posting to determine what work experience, technical skills and transferable skills the employer wants.

2. Reflecting on your previous experiences and current skill set to determine what relevant experiences and skills, both technical and transferrable, you are going to highlight in your resume.

No matter how good your content is, your resume won't be looked at if it isn't easy to read!

TIP If you find yourself applying to various industries or very diverse positions, you may need to have 2 to 3 versions of your resume prepared to best suit each situation.

NOTE As per UBC's Visual Identity policy, students are NOT permitted to utilize the UBC brand elements, which includes the UBC Crest, on any employment documents.

STEP 2
Resume at a glance

Header

Technical Skills

Education

Work Experience

Technical Projects

Student Teams

Awards/ Affiliations

Your Name
Discipline Engineering Student
Address (optional)
Email | Phone | LinkedIn URL

NOTE: You may use your preferred name, not necessarily your legal name

NOTE: Ensure you have a professional voicemail message to receive any incoming calls from an employer

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Skill Set Title 1
- Relevant Skill
- Relevant Skill

Skill Set Title 2
- Relevant Skill
- Relevant Skill

Skill Set Title 3
- Relevant Skill
- Relevant Skill

EDUCATION

University of British Columbia   **Expected Graduation Month, Year**
Bachelor of Applied Science - <Discipline> Engineering, <option>

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work Company 1, City, Province   **Start Month, Year - End Month, Year**
Position
- 2-4 bullets per experience, concise and descriptive
- Use accomplishment statements: Verb, Action, Result
- If you have volunteer experience, provide a different section

TECHNICAL PROJECTS

Project Title 1, Institution Name   **Start Month, Year - End Month, Year**
Position
- Provide accomplishment statements on the specific project worked on.
- 2-4 bullets per experience, concise and descriptive

ENGINEERING STUDENT TEAMS

Team Name 1, Institution Name   **Start Month, Year - End Month, Year**
Position
- Provide accomplishment statements on the specific project worked on
- 2-4 bullets per experience, concise and descriptive

AWARDS/AFFILIATIONS

Style Guidelines:

- Font size **9-12 pt**. Stick to an easy to read size for employer eyes
- One page resume
- Use **professional fonts** that are easy to read such as Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, Cambria, Garamond, Book Antiqua, and Trebuchet MS
- Avoid imagery, symbols, tables, and visual aesthetics when possible as many may not be recognized by an ATS
- Margins at least **2.5cm wide** on all edges

What to put in your resume

3.1 Resume Header

Make it easy for prospective employers to find you! A standard header should include the following information:

1. **Your Name:** This should be the biggest thing on the page. You can provide your legal or preferred name (typically first and last only), though ensure you provide your full legal name at the time of hiring. Or you can provide your name in the standardardized First (preferred) Last name (e.g.

2. **Your Discipline:** Clearly state the engineering degree program you are pursuing.

3. **Address (optional):** Your current home mailing address. In some cases, if you are originally from another country or area and are seeking work in those areas, it might be beneficial to utilize your family address in that area – consult your coordinator to determine what would be best for you.

4. **Phone Number:** Most people put their cell number these days – if so, ensure you have a professional voicemail message to receive any incoming calls from an employer that you cannot answer. It is considered unprofessional to call back a missed call if they did not leave a voicemail requesting you to do so, so ensure you have voicemail set-up during your job search process.

5. **Email Address:** Use a professional email address, ideally something that contains part or your entire name to make it easy for employers to contact you.

6. **Relevant Links:** If you have an online portfolio, LinkedIn account, or other URL you want to direct employers to, you can include this info in your header as well. Ensure you use a customized website address (URL) to avoid lengthy and unsightly web addresses.

Sample Headers

Amanda **MacDonald**
Chemical & Biological Engineering Student
4352 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC, V6M 3YR | amandais@gmail.com | C: 604.555.555

Taylor10@outlook.com
778.777.7777
778 Union St, Burnaby, BC,V5G 1M7

Zinyi (Taylor) Lam
Chemical Engineering Student

Lucas WILLIAMS
Computer Engineering

604-111-1111 | lucaswill@gmail.com | Burnaby, BC | LinkedIn.com/in/lucas | github.com/lucaswill

3.2 Technical Skills or Key Competencies

Employers often read this section before your cover letter to quickly determine if you have the fundamental skill sets required for a position. All readers of your resume (human or 'bot') scan for keywords relating to the job description. You should list your skills and competencies that are relevant to the job description for which you are applying in a neat and visually pleasing format.

TIP Reading through job descriptions for industries you are interested in is a great way to pick up on frequently requested skills and competencies, and can be a great starting place for you to identify the ones you want to highlight in your resume.

If you list a technical skill in this section, you should expand on it later in your resume to explain your depth of knowledge and/or experience with that skill. This is true for all skills listed with the exception of some certifications such as a Drivers' License and First Aid.

Samples of different categories and skills:

TECHNICAL SKILLS EXAMPLES

Computer
- AutoCAD/SolidWorks
- Microsoft Office
- MATLAB
- C, C++
- Assembly
- R
- XML, HTML

Laboratory
- Viscometry
- Gas Chromatography
- Organic Synthesis
- Micropipetting, Titrations
- Sensors, Transmitters
- Flowthrough Reactor
- Bomb Calorimeter

Field Work
- Rock and Mineral Testing
- Cone Penetration Test
- Mud Rotary, ODEX drilling
- Shelby Tube Sampling
- Trimble GPS Surveying
- Handled GPS
- Total Station

Hardware
- Microcontroller
- Oscilloscope
- Signal Generator
- Multimeter
- Breadboard
- Soldering Iron
- Circuit Analysis/Design

Tools and Techniques
- Milling
- Drilling
- Band Saw Cutting
- Bench Lathe
- Water-Jet Cutting
- Turret Punch
- Laser Cutting

Certifications
- WHMIS
- BioSafety Certificate
- First Aid and CPR
- BC Class 5 Driver's License
- Chemical Safety Certification
- Construction Safety Training
- Bear Awareness

*For more examples see **the** technical skills example sheet.*

3.3 Education Section

This section of the resume outlines the formal training you have completed or are currently completing as related to the industry you are applying for. Even if you did well in high school, your education listed on your resume should only include degrees, diplomas, certificates and training completed after secondary school.

Current Degree Program: Degree title, option (if applicable), school name, and completion date

You can also include:

- Your current cumulative average if over 80%
- Awards or achievements received during your degree program
- Up to three courses related to the position you are applying for (course title, not course code), including the grades received for those courses if over 80%

EDUCATION

University of British Columbia   *Expected Graduation: May, 2022*
Bachelor of Applied Science, Civil Engineering
Key Courses: Concrete Technology, Building Science, Transportation Planning and Analysis
CGPA: 89%

Previous Degree Programs:

If you completed any degrees or diplomas prior to your current degree program, or transferred in from another program, you can list them in this section of the resume as well.

EDUCATION

University of British Columbia   2018 - Present
Master of Engineering in Mining Engineering
Mine Economics and Finance
CGPA: 87.6%

University of Alberta   2010 - 2014
Bachelor of Science in Mining Engineering

Specialized Training:

If you have completed any relevant training courses or programs you can include these in the Education section as well.

EDUCATION

University of British Columbia   Expected Graduation: May 2021
Bachelor of Applied Science, Mining Engineering

Certification: CN Safety for Canadian Contractors   2015

3.4 Relevant Work Experience

The most important section of your resume, this section shows employers all the great experiences you have that make you an ideal candidate for the position. Remember, you don't need to include every experience you've ever had, only the ones that are relevant to the position.

> **?**
>
> **TIP** Employers can receive over 100 applications for some positions. Make it easy for them to see what you have to offer! Edit out any unnecessary information or overly lengthy sentences so they can easily understand the top skills you have to offer.

Once you have identified the key experiences that you want to include on your resume, use the following points to determine how to organize the information from those experiences:

- Industry standard is to list your experiences in reverse chronological order, meaning your most recent or current experiences should be at the top, working backwards to your oldest.
- Details of the position should include:
    1. Company Name
    2. Position Title
    3. Dates of Employment (typically right-justified on the page)
    4. Location (optional)
- Each experience should include **1-4 accomplishment statements** (details on how to create accomplishment statements are covered in Step 3).

Samples of work experience sections

WORK EXPERIENCE

Canada Post Corporation, Vancouver, BC   **January, 2016 - August, 2016**
Process Engineering Student Assistant

- Spearheaded a Manual Reduction Project, becoming a certified Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and identifying five Kaizen improvement opportunities for the company
- Audited work processed, evaluated compliance, and performed root cause analysis followed by implementation of improvements designed on AutoCAD and represented on Visio
- Consulted with management, education operators, and created documentation to ensure success during the Change Management process
- Presented engineering finding, analysis, and recommendations to senior operations management and successfully acquired their support for the proposed changes

Teck Resources, Trail, BC   **May, 2015 - December, 2015**
Process Operator

- Troubleshot mechanical and metallurgical issues, satisfying clients requirements for run time of over 90%
- Collected data and assay samples, recorded operations, and completed run sheets on Excel for evaluation by Process Engineering in a timely manner each day
- Applied safety training to identify hazards and take corrective actions to control risks, earning recognition from EH&S Staff and Management

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3.5 Project Experience Section

Including Project Experience on your resume can be a great way to showcase a particularly substantial project that you were involved with. Projects can come from a variety of experiences: school, volunteering, and even your own personal projects in which you developed relevant skills. Employers are keen to read about your individual contributions or role within a group project or team, as well as about the innovative ways you were able to make a design or idea cheaper, faster, or better.

Avoid filling your resume with project details or requirements, and instead give them insight into the specific skills you gained or developed such as leadership, project management, problem solving, or technical skills.

> **I don't need to know the details of the course projects (what it was, how it worked). It's of no interest during candidate selection. What I am very interested to know is specifically what each student's individual role in their course projects was.**
>
> **Devyn Farr**
> IC Test and Verification Manager
> ESS Technology Inc.

Similar to the work experience section, your Project Experience section should include the following information:

- Projects are listed in reverse chronological order
- Details of the project should include:
    1. Project Name – not course name ex. 'Hovercraft Project' instead of 'APSC 258 Project'
    2. Institution or organization where project was completed
    3. Dates of Project
    4. 1-4 accomplishment statements

Sample project sections

Geological Student:

TECHNICAL PROJECTS
_____

Geologic Outcrop Map of Jericho Beach, UBC   **March, 2013**
- Mapped the Paleocene-Eocene Huntingdon Formation along a 1.2 km stretch of Jericho Beach, using a Brunton to measure strikes and dips of bedding planes, maximizing the exposed shoreline being studied during low tide
- Revealed the mineralogical composition of the present geologic structures and outcrops along the intertidal zone using a hammer and hydrochloric acid, resulting in more accurate descriptions of the present coastal exposures

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Computer Student:

TECHNICAL PROJECTS
_____

Android Location App (Personal Project)   **January, 2016 - February, 2017**
- Developed an Android app using Google Maps Android API, Android Studio - that allows users in a given city to connect with people with similar hobbies and interests

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Civil Student:

TECHNICAL PROJECTS

Analysis of Single-Story Steel Building, UBC   **July, 2015 - September, 2015**

- Verified the structural members of a single-story steel building could support the applied load combinations calculated according to NBC2010
- Modeled the structure using SAP2000 and applied the calculated loads to determine tension, compression, shear and bending moments in the various members
- Compiled a 60 page technical report containing analysis, calculations and models to support the NBC 2010 standards of a single-story steel building

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Integrated Student:

TECHNICAL PROJECTS

eVST+: New Venture Design Project, UBC   **September, 2018 - Present**

- Prototyping a product using the Arduino microcontroller and MATLAB to integrate an array of analog sensors to a smart vest, producing live feedback to the user regarding their spinal alignment
- Performing engineering analysis, mechanical and electrical schematics, developing manufacturing cost projections, and technological validation of concept designs

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3.6 Interests Section

The interests section is often overlooked by students when creating their resume, but it certainly is not overlooked by prospective employers!

Sharing your interests on your resume shows employers that you are a well-rounded individual, and can also lead to great conversation starters during an interview which can help you feel more relaxed and therefore more appealing!

> **(?)**
>
> **TIP**   You can also use the interests section to convey to employers that you are the right 'fit' for their organization. For example, a position that requires you to work outdoors in remote or rugged conditions would be pleased to see applicants that enjoy camping or hiking. A position in a software development company might like to see students that are interested in video games or app development.

Pick three to five interests or activities you participate in and include these at the end of your resume in a neat and visually pleasing format. You can group similar interests and activities together to save space on your resume, such as hobbies, or sports.

Sample activities and interests sections

Interests

- Entrepreneurship
- 3D Printing
- Hockey
- Hiking
- Powerlifting

**ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS**

- Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM), Associate of The Royal Conservatory (ARCT), Diplomas for Teaching (Piano), Diploma for Performing (Piano), RCM grade 8 flute
- UBC Thunder Dragon Boat Team
- Swimming, wild camping, hiking, travelling, volunteering

STEP 4

Describe your experiences

When showcasing your experiences to an employer, be it relevant work experience or volunteer experience, the best way to show off the skills you've gained is through accomplishment statements.

Good accomplishment statements can be challenging to write and take time to develop, but ultimately result in prospective employers being able to easily and readily understand what you have to offer them. They are written in past- tense, first-person (without pronouns), and without filler words such as "the" or "a". We suggest using the following formula to create your accomplishment statements
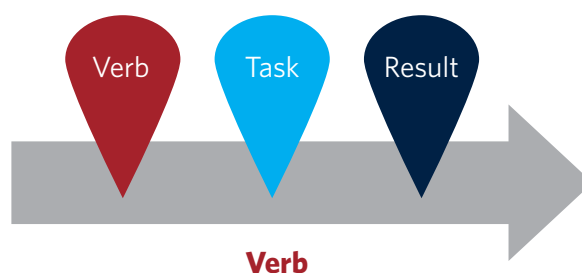
Verb

Start each statement with an action verb to describe your responsibility

Be sure to use a variety of verbs: Refer to table below for some ideas of great action words

Task

What duty or project did you complete or what was your responsibility?

Result

What was the outcome of completing that task?

There are two kinds of results you can have:

A skill that you gained through completing the task **or** a concrete end product, something you produced

Quantifiers (Optional)

Where possible, you need to quantify your experience using numbers to highlight your accomplishments. You may not be able to quantify every accomplishment, but doing so will help prospective employers better understand the scope and scale of your accomplishment. There's a big difference between presenting to a group of 5 students vs. presenting to a class of 50 students. Using quantifiers demonstrates to the employer your level of experience and impact

Example of Accomplishment Statements:

Accomplishment Statement	Verb	Task	Results	Quantifier
"Collaborated with faculty and staff to coordinate and participate in various public outreach initiatives to promote water conservation"	Collaborated	coordinate and participate in various public outreach initiatives	promote water conservation	N/A
"Developed excellent supervisory skills while engaging in daily activities with 30 children to ensure a positive learning experience"	Developed	excellent supervisory skills while engaging in daily activities with 30 children	ensure a positive learning experience	N/A
"Spearheaded the development of a new cartridge system to upgrade the existing manufacturing process, reducing labor time by an average of two minutes per product"	Spearheaded	development of a new cartridge system	reducing labour time	average of two minutes per product

You can also reorder the sentences to put more emphasis on the results if the result is particularly significant:

- "Reduced labor time **(Result)** by two minutes **(Quantifier)** per product after spearheading **(Verb)** the development of a new manufacturing method **(Task)**"

When developing your accomplishment statements, we suggest you try to identify transferable skills that you have gained through your work and school career. Transferable skills are highly valued by employers as you can apply them to a range of roles in a variety of settings. The more transferable skills you can demonstrate, the more competitive you will be in the marketplace.

See examples of Transferable Skills sheet in Resources

Action Verbs

Action verbs powerfully and descriptively explain what you did to gain or develop various technical and transferable skills. Begin each accomplishment statement on your resume with an action verb.

What do you think sounds better to a prospective employer?

66 *Worked with a team to make changes to an existing database* 99

OR

66 *Managed a team to uncover and analyze bugs within an existing database; recommended and executed upgrades to improve database functionality* 99

The following table includes commonly used action verbs that you can utilize at the start of each of your accomplishment statements. Strive to utilize a variety of verbs throughout your resume to showcase diversity in skills:

Accelerated	Circulated	Enabled	Inspected	Produced	Succeeded
Accomplished	Clarified	Encouraged	Installed	Programmed	Summarized
Achieved	Classified	Engineered	Instructed	Promoted	Supervised
Acted	Coached	Evaluated	Integrated	Provided	Systematized
Adapted	Collaborated	Executed	Interpreted	Publicized	Tabulated
Addressed	Collected	Expanded	Introduced	Recommended	Traced
Administered	Communicated	Expedited	Invented	Reconciled	Tracked
Advised	Compiled	Explained	Lectured	Recruited	Traded
Advocated	Completed	Fabricated	Led	Redesigned	Trained
Allocated	Computed	Facilitated	Maintained	Referred	Transferred
Analyzed	Consolidated	Familiarized	Managed	Rehabilitated	Transformed
Appraised	Contracted	Fashioned	Mediated	Remodeled	Translated
Approved	Controlled	Formulated	Moderated	Reorganized	Tutored
Acquired	Converted	Founded	Monitored	Repaied	Uncovered
Arbitrated	Coordinated	Generated	Motivated	Reviewed	Undertook
Arranged	Corresponded	Guided	Negotiated	Revitalized	Unified
Assembled	Delegated	Headed	Operated	Scheduled	Updated
Assigned	Delivered	Illustrated	Organized	Serviced	Upgraded
Attained	Demonstrated	Implemented	Originated	Shaped	Utilized
Attended	Designed	Improved	Overhauled	Simplified	Validated
Audited	Developed	Improvised	Oversaw	Solved	Verified
Authored	Devised	Increased	Performed	Specified	Weighed
Awarded	Directed	Influenced	Persuaded	Spearheaded	Widened
Balanced	Dispatched	Informed	Planned	Spoke	Withdrew
Calculated	Edited	Initiated	Presented	Strengthened	Won
Catalogued	Eliminated	Innovated	Prioritized	Stressed	Wrote

STEP 5
Optional content and sections

It is important to tailor your resume to the industry that you are applying to based on your own unique history of experiences. For example, if you are applying to a research and development position, you would be well served to highlight your academic success in an 'Awards' section on your resume. If you are seeking your first paid position, then your resume will be more appealing to an employer if it includes 'Volunteer Experience' that reflect on your work ethic and 'Engineering Student Teams' experience wherein you developed some key technical skills.

The following is a list of sections you might want to consider adding to your resume:

Publications
- Include the title of any journal papers, articles, conference contributions

Other Work Experience or Non-Technical Work Experience
- Part-time or full-time employment in a non-engineering related field

Volunteer Experience
- Unpaid activities for charities, clubs, events, and organizations can be listed to showcase your service to the community

Engineering Student Teams or Extra-Curricular Experiences
- Active membership and participation in student clubs or extra-curricular activities
- Do not include if you do not actively participate or have a role on the team

Awards and/or Scholarships
- Include a very brief description if the reason for the award is not obvious
- Do not include awards from more than three years ago
- List any memberships you possess in relevant professional associations; state the level of involvement if applicable

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What NOT to include on your resume

The following things should <u>not</u> be included on your resume:

- **References** - these are generally provided on a separate document at the time of interview
- **Photos** - including a photo on your resume is not a standard practice in Canada
- **Age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, health status and marital status** - your resume should be a factual document showcasing your relevant employment skills and abilities, therefore personal information should not be included

STEP 6
Personalize your resume

Now that you have nailed down your content, you can diverge from your initial template. Be creative and select a professional and unique template or create your own design that will make your resume stand out from the other students.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when designing your resume:

Colour
- It's okay to use bold, bright and dark colours. Just make sure it's still easy to read and keep the colour consistent throughout your resume. Try adding colour to your section headers!

Unique Layout
- Your resume layout can be unique and professional. You can design your own, or use templates available online.

Original Header
- Get creative with your header. Make it eye catching, add colour, an elegant font - making it easy for the hiring manager to select your resume. Include your LinkedIn, GitHub, online portfolio, and/or website - make sure the links are clickable.

Formatting
- As you cut/copy/paste from your initial version on your resume, ensure you keep a close eye on your spacing, bullets, and font size throughout your document.

Resources

Technical Skills Examples Sheet

Transferable Skills List

Checklist for a Powerful Resume