



WRITING AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

AVILA UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

Hooley-Bundschu Library and
Learning Commons

WEBSITE:
www.avila.edu/writingcenter

EMAIL:
Writing.center@avila.edu

Definition

- Use a template. You can find one at avila.edu/writingcenter in the handouts section. You can also find free templates packaged with standard word processing software (Word, Pages) and from websites like Canva and Zety.
- Some templates are highly ornate, and use is discouraged. Most resumes are run through AI programming by the employer and graphics can be troublesome.
- Adapt template to fit your needs. In the U.S., we never include pictures or headshots on our resumes.
- Regardless of whether you use a template or design it yourself, the look should be simple, uniform, and readable.
- Most resumes should be one page if possible.

Importance of Quality

- While resumes are supposed to be tailored to specific jobs, when you are a student, all your work experience may be considered relevant. Customize information to the job description of your former and/or current positions. Include volunteer work and organized student activities, especially those that show leadership and initiative.
- When describing work experience, focus on accomplishments rather than job responsibilities, especially those that would be most relevant to the job for which you are applying. Quantify achievements wherever possible. (e.g. "Developed new process for receiving, assigning, and resolving customer complaints. Reduced time spent on tasks by 50% while increasing customer satisfaction.")
- Think about any time you were given special responsibilities or assigned a project that might have been unique. Include these items with appropriate action verbs.

Style

- The language of a resume should be crisp and efficient. Avoid complete sentences and eliminate unnecessary words such as articles (a, an, the) and adverbs (very, really)
- Use active verbs. Ideally, every line describing your work experience should begin with a verb for which the implied subject is "I." Use past tense for work that occurred in the past and present tense/participles for work that is ongoing in the present.
- Tailor to the provided job description if possible. Use language that demonstrates that you have these skills in your description of what you have done but be careful not to exaggerate or appear to have done more than you have actually done!