

10 Tips for Creating a Great Resume

Your resume is one of your most valuable tools, and you want to keep it sharp! Resumes are used for school admissions, scholarships, internships, jobs, and even to share with professionals who want to learn more about you. A great resume will open doors to incredible opportunities. However, a poor resume can prevent doors from opening. In addition to providing a downloadable [sample resume template](#), Leadership Brainery has compiled this list of ten tips to help you create a great resume.

1. Create a Master Resume

A master resume includes all of your work experiences and achievements to date (including internships, volunteer opportunities, and campus leadership roles). Keeping a record of your experiences will allow you to tailor your resume to fit the job description easily. It is essential to amend your resume or to have multiple versions, depending on the opportunity you are applying for. However, start with your Master Resume. Remember, “one size [does not] fit all.”

2. Include Job-Specific Experiences

Although Leadership Brainery’s resume sample does not include additional sections such as certifications/research/publications/boards and affiliations, you should use your discretion to decide if these other sections are necessary. For example, suppose you are applying for a research assistant position. In that case, it will be necessary for you to let the employer know if you have completed research and/or if you have been published in an article or academic journal.

3. Keep It To One Page

We’re building a resume, not a Curriculum Vitae (CV). Resumes for college students and entry-level job applicants should be no more than one page. Your responsibility is to showcase only essential details that make you stand out as an applicant (for the specific role you are applying for). Reviewers will appreciate your ability to be concise.

4. Plain is Good

Don’t shy away from using a “plain” resume template because it looks “boring.” Boring is good because it allows the employer to quickly read through and pick out the important information they seek. Standard font sizes and fonts include 11/12 point, Arial, Calibri, Garamond, and Times New Roman. Black text on a white background is also standard.

5. Consistency is Key

You should use the same format for the entire document. Do not switch between fonts, bullets and colors. You have some room for personalization in the section titles, but your resume as a whole should flow.

6. Stay Away From Images

Including images in your resume takes up valuable space. The reviewer may wonder why you chose to use this limited space to include an image instead of telling them more about yourself. More often, you may have an opportunity to upload additional materials. You can showcase or supplementary materials then.

7. Use Reverse-Chronological Order

Inputting your experiences in reverse-chronological order means describing your most recent experience first and moving backward in time for each subsequent position. Formatting your resume this way makes it easier for the reviewer to read and understand what you're working on presently. This also provides the reviewer a greater understanding of your growth over time.

8. Past vs. Present Tense

Past vs. present tense is a simple yet often forgotten rule. If you are not currently involved in the listed experience, you must list it in the past tense. This provides additional clarity and further helps distinguish the experiences you are no longer involved in.

9. Quantify Your Achievements

Quantifying your achievements helps your resume stand out. Highlight if you led a team of 50+ students or if you were the treasurer for a student organization and oversaw an annual budget of \$6,000. Adding figures to your achievements allows the reviewer to clearly note the outcomes of your involvements. Remember, all numbers lower than ten must be spelled out. All numbers above ten require you to use their numerical value (i.e., seven, 11, 1,200).

10. Proof-read

Proof-read, proof-read, proof-read! You must make sure that there are no errors in your resume. Errors give a negative impression and convey that you do not pay attention to detail, an essential skill required for every profession.

Bonus: *Your Resume Header*

- **Use your personal, most frequently checked, email address unless otherwise stated.** Not all students keep access to their school email addresses once they graduate. Additionally, if you are applying to a job outside of your undergraduate institution, you may find it useful to separate your school/work emails.
- **Use a professional email address.** Stay away from emails that can foster biases, such as partylover13@yahoo.com. Examples of professional emails include your first and last name. For example, john.doe@aol.com, and Doe14@gmail.com.
- **Feel free to add your LinkedIn profile URL to your header.** But, do this only if your LinkedIn profile is complete and up to date. More than ever, employers are utilizing LinkedIn as a resource to hire applicants. Some applications include the feature to apply directly from your LinkedIn account. Updating your profile will allow you to display information that isn't on your resume and provide the reviewer with an opportunity to get to know you better.
- **Save and Send your resume as a PDF file.** Sending your resume in PDF format is recommended as it preserves your formatting and is universally compatible. PDFs are also ATS-friendly, ensuring your qualifications are easily recognized by automated applicant tracking systems.