

Work Search Activity 3: Writing Your Resume

FOR THE TEACHER

Introduction

In this activity, the follow-up to **Work Search Activity 2: What Makes a Good Resume**, students will use the information they've acquired about resumes to write their own resumes. They will:

- Inventory skills they have acquired through various activities and experiences
- Link their skills, experiences, and achievements to the requirements outlined in a job posting
- Use Resume Builder to create and refine their own resumes
- Build confidence in their ability to identify and highlight their skills and qualifications

Setting the Stage

We suggest completing **Work Search Activity 2: What Makes a Good Resume** before completing this activity. Classroom discussion can focus on what students have learned (or know) about resume writing. Remind students that their resume may be the only chance they have to impress potential employers who likely have hundreds—or even thousands—more resumes to read through for a single open position. On average, a resume gets less than a minute of consideration from employers, so it's important to make every word count. **(Have students reflect on the challenges of having their resume stand out from those of other applicants in the My Journal section of their Plans.)**

Think about inviting hiring managers from local businesses to speak to your class about what they are looking for when they review applicants' resumes and to provide feedback on some students' resumes. If you'd like to incorporate this activity into other classes, you can modify it so that students research content and write resumes for historical figures, fictional characters, important scientists, or other individuals covered by your curriculum. Including resume writing activities in other classes ensures students get plenty of practice writing strong resumes.

The **Action Verbs** handout included with this activity provides students with lots of options for conveying job-related tasks and achievements in a concise and persuasive way in their resumes. The list is also available for download in the **Effective Bullets Points** section, under **Resumes** in the **Employment Guide**.

Starting the Program

Go to www.careercruising.com. Enter your personal My Plan username and password in the spaces provided, and click on **Log In**.

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PART A: BRAINSTORM RESUME CONTENT

Many job searchers find it difficult to confidently take stock of their abilities and skills, especially if they don't have a lot of work experience. Think about *all* the activities you've participated in, including jobs, clubs, school projects, sports, and hobbies, and answer the following:

1. Describe a situation in which you had to identify and prioritize tasks in order to successfully accomplish something before a deadline.

2. Give an example of a time when you were really proud of yourself, or stood up for yourself.

3. Describe an occasion when you set a good example for members of a group, or motivated others to achieve a goal.

4. Describe how you successfully persuaded a friend, classmate, or parent to see your point of view about an issue that was important to you.

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5. Write about a time you weren't sure how to handle a problem, and what you did to figure it out.

6. Describe an important decision you had to make, and the steps you took to arrive at your decision.

7. Give an example of a time you had to gather and analyze a lot of information in order to give an informed recommendation or opinion about something.

8. Describe an instance when you didn't get along with someone you had to work with, and what you did to resolve the situation and ensure your work got done.

You may not have known you were doing it at the time, but through the experiences you described above, you've successfully demonstrated several skills and characteristics that many employers look for: **organization, confidence, leadership, communication, problem solving, decision making, analytical thinking, and teamwork.**

In the chart on the following page, make a list of all of your activities and accomplishments, and identify the skills you acquired or demonstrated through each experience.

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<p><u>Activities / Experiences</u> <i>(e.g. jobs, volunteer opportunities, extracurricular activities, special training, important projects, memberships, etc.)</i></p>	<p><u>Skills</u> <i>(e.g. goal setting, creativity, critical thinking, numerical literacy, proficiency in Excel, research, adaptability, etc.)</i></p>

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PART B: FIND A JOB POSTING

Use the **Job Search** tool to find a job posting that interests you. Sign in to Career Cruising with your personal My Plan username and password, and click on **Employment**. In the **Job Search** section, search for a posting by job title, keyword, or company name. (Hint: Try selecting a company that you know employs students. The location does not matter for this activity.)

Once you've found a suitable posting, answer the following questions:

1. **What position is being advertised?** _____

2. **What company is hiring?** _____

3. **What tasks will the successful candidate perform?**

4. **What are the education requirements?**

5. **What skills or characteristics are applicants required to possess?**

6. **What other qualifications are mentioned in the posting?**

PART C: WRITE YOUR RESUME

Use Resume Builder Guide at **the end of this activity** to fill in and refine the content in your resume. Tailor the content to the requirements of the job posting you located. Refer to the chart on **page three** of this activity for experiences and skills to add to your resume. To access the Resume Builder, go to your My Plan homepage and click on **Build My Resume**.

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SUMMARY – YOUR VIEWS

Now that you've written your resume, answer the following questions:

1. What skills or characteristics were you surprised to learn that you have after brainstorming content for your resume?

2. What is the most challenging part of writing your resume?

3. Do you see any weak areas in your resume? What can you do to improve these areas before you apply for a job?

4. What skills or achievements are you most proud of? How will you highlight them in your resume?

5. What employers in your community would you consider sending your resume to? Why?

Resume Builder Guide

Your Name

Address (from your personal profile)
Phone number (from your personal profile)
Email address (from your personal profile)

Career Objectives

Customize the objective to match each position you apply for. Rather than sending out a generic resume to multiple employers, show that you care enough to state why you want this job. The statement should indicate something desirable in your skill set or what you plan to contribute to the company if you are selected for the position.

Educational History

List the diplomas, degrees, training workshops, continuing education programs, and other relevant forms and levels of education you've obtained. You can use the Description field to highlight relevant courses, projects, or achievements, or make any other clarifications about your educational history as required by the job posting.

Work Experience

This section is often considered the “heart” of a resume. Give a brief outline of your career progression by presenting the relevant jobs in your work history. Make sure that starting and ending dates, job titles, and employer information are accurate.

Use the Description field to record skill/task/tools/result statements (see the **Employment Guide**) that emphasize accomplishments and achievements, rather than just duties performed on the job. Forge strong links between previous positions and the position sought, especially for your transferable skills.

Show—don't tell—by choosing action verbs and punchy adjectives over passive verbs and vague descriptors. See the **Effective Bullet Points** section for **Resumes** in the **Employment Guide** for tips on how to write concise points that incorporate action words.

Volunteer Experience

This section describes your unpaid experiences, which can be beneficial for showing that you are a well-rounded person outside of the work environment. Keep this section brief, and tailor it to match the career/job objective or job posting. Use the Description field to highlight relevant skills acquired, such as leadership or organizational skills.

Awards & Certificates

List a selection of relevant academic awards, scholarships, memberships in professional associations, and/or certifications (maximum 6). Include the award title and date awarded; you can use the Description field to identify the granting institution or any other pertinent information.

Extracurricular Activities

List your relevant activities, including organization name and dates. Use the Description field to explain your role (e.g. Member or Chair), duties performed, and transferrable skills acquired.

Hobbies & Interests

Only include hobbies and interests if they are somehow related to the career/job objective (e.g. *you are applying to be an outdoor tour guide and you enjoy rock climbing and snowshoeing*). Use the Description field to describe the relevant skills you've acquired.

Skills & Abilities

This section provides a customized snapshot of your unique skill set, qualifications, and personal attributes. Many people, therefore, choose to place it right after the career/job objective so that employers will be more likely to read it. (Note that you can move sections in the Resume Builder tool, and you can rename this section **Skills Summary** when you export your resume.) Highlighting valuable skills in this section can be especially helpful for those with less relevant work experience, such as someone who is searching for an entry-level position or changing careers.

Select four to six skills or abilities from the dropdown menu, and use the Description field to target each to the requirements of the job posting. You don't have to use full sentences, but the descriptions should be free of grammatical errors and inconsistencies. Be precise and accurate in your wording. It might help to include industry keywords, in case an automated system is sorting through applications.

Additional Information

Include this optional section only if the information you want to relay to a potential employer doesn't fit easily under any of the other headings.

References

In general, do not include your references' contact information on your resume. It is also unnecessary to have the notation "References Available Upon Request" on a resume, as this is assumed by the employer. You can prepare and print references separately in the References section of the **Resume Builder**.

Choose your references carefully, and obtain their permission before forwarding any of their contact information to another party. It's a good idea to give your references a copy of your resume and discuss your qualifications before they are contacted by potential employers.

Refer to the **Resumes** section in the **Employment Guide** for additional tips and suggestions for composing effective resumes.

Action Verbs

accelerated	changed	deployed	equalized	influenced
accentuated	charted	derived	established	informed
accomplished	clarified	described	estimated	initiated
achieved	classified	designed	evaluated	innovated
acquired	closed	detailed	examined	inspected
acted	coached	detected	exceeded	inspired
adapted	collaborated	determined	executed	installed
addressed	collected	developed	exhibited	instituted
adjudicated	combined	devised	exhorted	instructed
adjusted	commanded	diagnosed	expanded	integrated
administered	commercialized	differentiated	expedited	intensified
advanced	commoditized	directed	experimented	interpreted
advised	communicated	discerned	explained	interviewed
advocated	compared	discovered	explored	introduced
altered	compelled	dispensed	exported	invented
analyzed	compiled	displayed	expressed	inventoried
anchored	completed	dissected	extricated	investigated
applied	composed	distinguished	fabricated	itemized
appointed	computed	distributed	facilitated	joined
appraised	conceived	diversified	financed	judged
arbitrated	concluded	diverted	finalized	justified
arranged	conducted	documented	fixed	launched
articulated	configured	dominated	forecasted	led
ascertained	conserved	doubled	forged	learned
assembled	consolidated	drafted	formalized	lectured
assessed	constructed	drew	formed	leveraged
assisted	consulted	drove	formulated	liaised
associated	continued	earned	fostered	licensed
audited	contracted	edited	founded	listed
augmented	contrasted	educated	gained	listened
authenticated	controlled	effected	generated	located
authored	converted	effectuated	governed	lowered
authorized	conveyed	elected	graduated	maintained
balanced	coordinated	eliminated	guided	managed
bestowed	corrected	emphasized	halted	manipulated
brainstormed	corresponded	empowered	handled	manufactured
briefed	counseled	enacted	headed	mapped
broadened	crafted	encouraged	hired	marked
budgeted	created	endeavored	honored	marketed
built	critiqued	endorsed	hosted	mastered
calculated	crystallized	endured	hypothesized	masterminded
calibrated	curtailed	energized	identified	maximized
capitalized	cut	enforced	illustrated	measured
captured	deciphered	engineered	imagined	mediated
catalogued	decided	enhanced	implemented	mentored
catapulted	decreased	enlarged	imported	merged
categorized	defined	enlisted	improved	minimized
centralized	delegated	enlivened	improvised	modeled
chaired	delivered	ensured	incorporated	moderated
championed	demonstrated	entrenched	increased	modernized

modified	pioneered	recaptured	retrieved	studied
monetized	planned	received	reviewed	structured
monitored	positioned	recognized	revised	substantiated
motivated	predicted	recommended	revitalized	succeeded
narrated	prepared	reconciled	satisfied	suggested
navigated	prescribed	recorded	saved	summarized
negotiated	presented	recruited	scheduled	supervised
networked	presided	redesigned	searched	supplemented
nominated	processed	reduced	secured	supplied
normalized	procured	reengineered	serviced	supported
observed	produced	referred	selected	surpassed
obtained	programmed	refined	separated	synergized
offered	progressed	regained	served	synthesized
officiated	projected	regulated	shaped	systematized
operated	promoted	rehabilitated	shared	tabulated
optimized	propelled	reinforced	shepherded	talked
orchestrated	proofread	rejuvenated	simplified	targeted
ordered	proposed	remedied	sketched	taught
organized	prospected	rendered	slashed	tended
oriented	protected	renegotiated	sold	terminated
originated	proved	renewed	solidified	tested
outsourced	provided	renovated	solved	thwarted
overcame	publicized	reorganized	sparked	traced
overhauled	published	repaired	spearheaded	trained
oversaw	purchased	reported	specified	transcribed
participated	qualified	repositioned	spoke	transferred
partnered	quantified	represented	standardized	transformed
perceived	questioned	researched	started	transitioned
perfected	raised	resolved	streamlined	translated
performed	rated	responded	steered	
persuaded	ratified	restored	stimulated	
piloted	realigned	restructured	strategized	
pinpointed	rebuilt	retained	strengthened	