Introduction to Resume

A Strong Resume:

- Is an advertisement, and you are the product. Your goal is to get hiring managers to buy into what you're selling- which means giving you an interview. It is the best showcase of what you have to offer
- Includes a running list of all of your relevant positions and accomplishments **in reverse chronological order**
- Contains commonly used keywords and core competencies that employers are looking for in your field

- Is simple, clean, up-to-date, concise, and without grammatical/spelling errors (put your best foot forward)

Resume Overview

Header & Date

- *Name, City/State, Phone Number. Email address*

Professional Profile/Summary (*Optional: if you have less work experience and want to play up your education and knowledge)

- Sum up a long or varied career history with a few key accomplishments and display core competencies

Education

- A list of all schools you have attended and degrees earned (do **NOT** include high school)
- Includes: *Current or Anticipated Degree(s), Cumulative or Major G.P.A,* Relevant Coursework (if relates to the job description), Graduation honors, Relevant Honors, Publications, Projects, and Study Abroad

- Put your estimated graduation year if you've not graduated yet

Work Experience

- Provides an overview of **relevant positions which can include paid, volunteer, or internships**
- Includes: *Name of Employer, Position Title, Location, Dates of Employment, and responsibility & results   /* .
- For your bullet points   , they should follow an XYZ, STAR, or CAR format

    o   1) Start each line with strong actions words,

    o   2) Use past tense & does not include the pronoun "I" e.g. I led the team (X),

    o   3) Illustrate the impact of what you did and why it mattered,

    o   4) Have 2 – 3 bullet points, and

    o   5) Be specific (use statistics whenever possible)

    o   6) no hanging lines (less than three words on a line)

Additional Sections

- Technical Skills, Language Competencies (Ex. Full Professional Proficiency, Low-Intermediate Proficiency, written and oral Fluency), Publications/Presentations, Projects, Professional Training, Community Service/Leadership, Awards/Honors, Affiliations, Hobbies & Interests

Final Check List

Page Length (1 full page)	**No** acronyms or abbreviations	
Margins	**No** use of first person	
Condense style of writing	Spell Check	
Consistency (Capitalization, Dates, Verb Tense)	PDF or doc., docx.	
White spaces: can the reader easily digest the material?	Strong action words and results-based accomplishments	

Introduction to Cover Letters

A Strong Cover Letter:

- Is tailored to demonstrate the relevant values that you bring to the position as well as the culture and mission of the organization *(do your research!)*
- Does **NOT** simply restate your resume. Constructs a narrative that encompasses your relevant experiences to tell your specific story related to the position
- Leaves the reader wanting to know more about who you are and what you have accomplished that makes you well qualified for the position

Cover Letter Overview

Header & Date

- Align to match your resume header (it should be the same font and format as your resume)
- The header should include your name and contact information

Hiring Manager's Name and Address of the organization

- Address the cover letter to a specific person or hiring manager. Otherwise, address the cover letter "To the Hiring Manager" or "To the Hiring Committee". Do **NOT** address "To Whom It May Concern" or "Dear Sir or Madam."

Body

- *Introductory Paragraph:* Clearly **state the position** to which you are applying. Make a strong and lasting first impression by **showing enthusiasm**, **demonstrating knowledge of the organization**, and by **sharing compelling reasons** why you are well qualified for the position. **Identify key qualifications** you have to make you an asset and these main traits should be further explained in detail in the middle paragraphs
- *Middle Paragraphs:* Emphasize in each paragraph your key qualifications. Discuss how **your background** matches the qualifications and requirements of the position. Use **specific, detailed,** and **concise language** to demonstrate your value by describing your accomplishments. Try to use language directly from the job description and company website. This shows that you've done your research and would fit well with the company environment. Each paragraph should ideally highlight one specific reason you either want the job, deserve the job, or can add value to the organization via the job. Each paragraph should link smoothly and logically into the next.
- *Concluding Paragraph:* **Reiterate your interest** in the position, **highlight the attributes** you would bring to the organization if hired, and **express your interest in having the opportunity to meet the employer in person (if applicable)** to further discuss your qualifications.

Closing

- Electronic format closes with "sincerely" followed by your name. Add your electronic signature for more formality.

Final Check List

Contact Information		Demonstrate Your Value	
Margins		Be Concise	
No use of Abbreviations and Jargon		Spell Check	
Accomplishment/Results Orientated		PDF	
Key Words		Does not restate the resume	

Introduction to Interview

A Strong Interview:

- Is the opportunity for you to sell yourself to the interviewer with clear descriptions that you are not only qualified but also the *most* qualified of all the candidates invited to interview for the same position.

- It is also an opportunity for you to show you've done your research and are an active applicant

- Is a two-way street; you should come prepared with well-prepared questions that show more than just your interest in the company, but your desire to know what the culture fit would be like, what a successful applicant or hire does in their first 3,6,9 months, etc.

- Always ends with gratitude on your part, both in the interview and immediately following via email (or linkedin if that was your method of communication)

Interview Overview

Prepare for the Interview: Preparation is key to acing all interviews.

- *Research the Organization:* Learn about the company & the industry. Scan the company's website and view their mission statement. Research the company so that you are up to date on any recent news or media mentions. Check out social media accounts to see what they publicly discuss. Review publications in your field of interest, noting any industry shifts that may be relevant. All of this will help you better understand the organization's **needs, values & interests**. Knowing who their main competition is, how and why they differ, who their customers are, why they choose this organization, etc. - all important aspects to a successfully prepared interview.
- *Research the Position:* Carefully review the job description to identify **key skills and qualifications** the employer has outlined. Go beyond the job posting and reach out to someone in that role or someone who was in that role to get more in-depth information. Check job review portals (glassdoor, blind) to read both the positives and negatives of the position from an employee point of view.
- *Know Yourself:* Study your resume and find how your education and experiences demonstrate **the particular skills required by employers**. In an interview, you need to prove that you have skills

to match up to what employers are seeking. Use the table below to identify & articulate your skills.

What an Employer Wants	Example of a Time I Demonstrated It through Education & Experiences in your Resume
(e.g.) **Analytical** (you are able to decipher information to problem solve, make decisions or anticipate needs)	
(e.g.) **Creativity** (you can think outside the box or you are artistically creative; you find different ways to accomplish tasks or sell an idea)	
(e.g.) **Teamwork** (you work well with other and can play critical role within a group)	
(e.g.) *Fill in the black for your position*	

- *Practice Answering Questions:* Refer to Common Questions below. Skillful interviewing takes technique and practice. Be sure to give a specific example including S.T.A.R (Situation, Task, Action, & Result) to craft more well-developed and memorable answers to questions.

Most Common Interview Questions
1. Introduce yourself.
2. What do you know about our organization and the position?
3. What strengths would you bring to this position? Any weaknesses?
4. What are you passionate about? *link your answer to company's mission & vision, core business*
5. What do you consider to be your biggest professional achievement ?
6. Why do you want to work here? ? If hired , how can you contribute to this organization?
7. Tell me about a time when you had to solve a problem and how you dealt with it.
8. Tell me about a time you worked with a group or a team to accomplish a task.
9. What are your short-term and long-term goals? (5 years and 10 years)
10. Why should we hire you?
11. How do you handle conflict in the workplace?
12. Do you have any questions for us?
13. What do you like to do outside of work?
14. What is your greatest weakness?
15. How did you hear about this position? What attracted you to the position?

Techniques for answering Interview Questions
Q. Tell me about a time you demonstrated creative thinking in order to get a task completed. A. When I was a junior at SUNY Korea, I was the Vice President of the USC (Situation). In previous years, participation had declined, and leadership decided that we should make an effort to increase participation in campus events (Task). In order to do this within a limited budget, we had to find ways to creatively market our club. We brainstormed for a while and I proposed an idea for t-shirt giveaways, which our organization had never done. T-shirts were a good way to get name recognition on campus and to boost participation , so we came to an agreement (Action). I designed and handed out 150 shirts to students during the Winter 2021 semester. As a direct

response to our t-shirt prizes, our participation in   the following USC events increased by 20% (Result).

- ***Be Prepared to Ask Back: "Do you have any question for us?"*** Take the opportunity and ask an employer. Asking questions shows that you are interested in the position. Conversely, not asking questions may show that you are uninterested.

Sample Questions to Ask an Employer

1. What are the most important things you'd like to see someone accomplish in this position?
2. What are some of the challenges of this position?
3. Where do you think the organization can grow the most?
4. I've recently read about your company with the news/research of_____. Can you tell me more about it?

5. What does a successful first year look like for X position here at Y company?

6. What are the characteristics of top-performing team members here? Who is likely to thrive in this environment?

7. What are the opportunities for learning and development or further training within the organization?

8. What does a typical day look like for X role?

9. What is the office or company culture like? Why is it that way?

10. Is there anything either on my resume or about me that we haven't covered that you are curious about that I can answer now?

The Day of the Interview

- **Print Out Hard Copy of your Resume and other Supporting Documents:** Print your resume, portfolio and other supporting documents you're asked to bring (i.e.) a list of references.
- **Arrive approximately 10-15 minutes early for your interview:** Arriving early gives you time to collect your thoughts. If you arrived earlier than 10-15 minutes, go somewhere and return when it is 10-15 minutes before your interview time.
- **Dress Appropriately for the Interview:** Wear a professional-looking suit with minimal accessories (*depending on the role - for example, a SW engineer role at a startup will likely be dressed very differently than someone in consulting or finance). If you have questions about what to wear, contact the Career Center.
- **Positive First Impression:** Walk into the room confidently. Put on your best attitude and ignore all negative manners. If in a Western/international setting - feel comfortable to shake hands with your interviewers (as long as there aren't too many, <4 or 5).
- **Speak Clearly and Enthusiastically:** You want to portray confidence, a genuine interest in the position, passion for your prior experiences, demonstrate your strong communication skills.
- **Maintain Eye Contact:** Make sure the interviewer sees the eagerness in you.

- Get their name: make sure you get the name of everyone in the interview so you at least have a way to look them up later when you want to send a thank you note.

After the interview:
- **Take Notes:** Take time immediately after each interview and write notes about how the interview went, the questions and your answers, anything important from the conversation or the interviewer, what you learnt for future reference. This will help you when writing a Thank-You email and a possible second interview, plus your future interviews.
- **Send Thank-You Email:** Immediately after your interview, send a thank-you email. This is a courteous way of acknowledging your gratitude, and it gives you one more chance to express your interest in the position.
- **Follow-Up:** If you have not heard from the organization within a week, it is appropriate to follow up. This will allow you the opportunity to reiterate your interest, offer the opportunity to further explain to them your skills and qualifications, and offer to answer any additional questions they may have.

Mock Interviews: Schedule a Mock Interview with CDC staff to find out what you do well and what you can improve upon. Record your Mock Interview to assist in the review at your/CDC's agreement.

Most Common Job Interview Questions and How Best to Answer Them

Tell us about yourself: Within 1-2 minutes, you should talk about your background, minding that interviewers already read your resume, and link your experience to the current day, meaning why you are here and why you want to work for this company.. Summarize your educational history in no more than three sentences, and talk about your professional experience if you have any. This is the time to clarify the gaps on your resume if you have any, as well as to talk about your skills and shortly about the personality, which all should relate to the position. It should ideally start or finish with the position, in a best case scenario you can do both.

What do you consider to be your biggest professional achievements: This is an opportunity for you to talk about your internship experience if you have any and what you consider to be your biggest achievements in the process. Paint a vivid description of what you actually did and how it helped the company or team you worked with. Talk about results, that's what the recruiter wants to hear. If you don't have internship experience, still relate a story or anecdote that shows your strengths and/or skills that would be relevant to the position.

What are your biggest weaknesses: Make sure you state your professional weaknesses, and you shouldn't say anything that vilifies you. Pick a weakness of yours and embellish it in a way that it will eventually turn out interesting, or a weakness that you are currently working on and give brief details about steps you have taken to improve that area. The interviewer will consider you as someone who goes out of your way to look for solutions to problems. It should however be a real/genuine reflection - not an opportunity to slyly brag about a character strength (e.g. "I am too hard-working - I care too much about my work"). A good example is something like "I struggle to say no often, which might mean that I take on extra responsibilities in order to help other teams or departments, to the possible detriment of my existing tasks - often leading to some burnout. I'm working on it though by actively managing my workload on

a dashboard that is prioritized so that I can see what I need to do first and that way, if I have additional bandwidth, I can then take on extra work"

What are your biggest strengths: Simply say what your actual professional strengths are and demonstrate with a short description of how that strength has helped solve a work-related problem. Do not try to present yourself as a superhuman. Again - it should relate to the job and the value that you can add or create at your new organization, so if you are an amazing video editor because you edit youtube videos in your free time, but this role is for an accounting firm as an auditing intern, it probably wouldn't make much sense to go into too much detail describing your strengths as and technical skill as a video editor.

What motivates you: Tailor your answer to the role you are interviewing for and mention positive things, like being a part of a team, being the leader, discovering and learning new things, etc.

Where do you see yourself in the next five years: Talk about how you intend to grow from the experience you will receive from the role and some value you expect to add to the company. Your answer should always include why in order to achieve your greater goal - you need the experience and opportunity that the company is presenting to you right now. This role should always be a crucial stepping stone to achieve the next step on the line - that lets them know you have a personal and intrinsic desire to succeed at this role.

What do you know about the company: Describe what you have found out about the company in relation to íts competitors and the industry at large. Do not mention if their competitors are doing better than them   . Highlight how the company is doing especially in the area of the position you are interviewing for and how you think it is the best place for you to pursue your career. If you can be more personal about it too - especially in a B2C context, mentioning your interest in the company not just as an employee but as a customer, that can also be a great way to show your genuine interest in the company and what they do.

How did you find out about this opening: Even if you learned about it through a random job search, try to tell the interviewer(s) what caught your attention about this particular opening and how excited you were when you received the invitation to interview. Also be sure to mention where you found it, or if someone referred you to the position (especially if they are a current or former employee).

What type of work environment do you prefer: Simply tie this answer to   the work culture of the company and how it connects to the position you are interviewing for. You should elaborate on how the work environment you prefer will help you be more successful in your role and add value to the company.

Why do you want this job: This also should be about how well you know about the role and your overall career development, and how working in the company will fit into your future career plans.

What is your salary expectation: The best way to go about this is to know beforehand the average salary of the position you are interviewing for. Do   research and find out a range that is average or normal for the   position in that geography   , then give a salary range. Do not mention a specific amount as it is too direct. Also let your interviewer know you are flexible on the salary expectation and it is left for you to accept or reject what they offer you. You can also be straightforward and ask what the range is that they are able to offer and that you are open to reaching a target number together through other means, such as through benefits or other deciding factors that are valuable to you (remote or hybrid work, learning & development credit/opportunity, etc.)

Why should we hire you: This question sums up everything about the interview, and another opportunity to sell yourself. Emphasize not only how you can do the job, but also you do it better than any other candidate. Talk about your most important skills and how you can produce results within the company culture.

Action Verb List for Resumes & Cover Letters

Management Skills	Communication Skills	Research Skills	Technical Skills	Teaching Skills	Financial Skills	Creative Skills	Helping Skills	Clerical or Detail Skills	Other Verbs
administered	addressed	clarified	assembled	adapted	administered	acted	assessed	approved	achieved
analyzed	arbitrated	collected	built	advised	allocated	conceptualized	assisted	arranged	expanded
assigned	arranged	critiqued	calculated	clarified	analyzed	created	clarified	catalogued	improved
attained	authored	diagnosed	computed	coached	appraised	customized	coached	classified	pioneered
chaired	collaborated	evaluated	designed	communicated	audited	designed	counseled	collected	reduced (losses)
consolidated	convinced	examined	devised	coordinated	balanced	developed	demonstrated	compiled	resolved (problems)
contracted	corresponde d developed	extracted	engineered	demystified	budgeted	directed	diagnosed	dispatched	restored
coordinated	directed	identified	fabricated	developed	calculated	established	educated	executed	spearheaded
delegated	drafted	inspected	maintained	enabled	computed	fashioned	expedited	generated	transformed
developed	edited	interpreted	operated	encouraged	developed	founded	facilitated	implemented	
directed	enlisted	interviewed	overhauled	evaluated	forecasted	illustrated	familiarized	inspected	
evaluated	formulated	investigated	programmed	explained	managed	initiated	guided	monitored	
executed	influenced	organized	remodeled	facilitated	marketed	instituted	motivated	operated	
improved	interpreted	reviewed	repaired	guided	planned	integrated	referred	organized	
increased	lectured	summarized	solved	informed	projected	introduced	rehabilitated	prepared	
organized	mediated	surveyed	upgraded	instructed	researched	invented	represented	processed	
oversaw	moderated	systematized		persuaded		originated		purchased	
planned	negotiated			set goals		performed		recorded	
prioritized	persuaded			stimulated		planned		retrieved	
produced	promoted			trained		revitalized		screened	
recommended	publicized					shaped		specified	
reviewed	reconciled							systematized	
scheduled	recruited							tabulated	
strengthened	spoke							validated	
supervised	translated								
	wrote								

~ From The Damn Good Resume Guide by Yana Parker, Berkeley: Ten Speed Press