



Yale SCHOOL OF NURSING

Resume Writing Guide

What is the Purpose of a Resume?

A **resume is a marketing tool** and is one of the ways to tell your story by presenting your skills, knowledge, and experience to a potential employer in a concise, easy-to-read way. *The average employer spends only 15 to 20 seconds reviewing a resume. Ensure that yours is targeted, error-free and easy to skim!*

Remember: Your resume does not get you the job; it gets you the interview.

Tips for writing an outstanding resume:

- **One or two pages in length:** Employers prefer a one- or two-page resume, depending on your level of experience.
- **Margins and Font:** We recommend 0.5 inch margins or greater and 11 point Times New Roman font.
- **Format:** Be consistent with indentation, capitalization, punctuation, font style, font size, spacing, and other formatting parameters.
- **Avoid Clutter:** Too much text and not enough white space may discourage someone from reading your resume.
- **Target Your Content:** Highlight experiences & transferable skills most relevant to the position. This includes incorporating keywords from the job posting.
- **Avoid Pronouns:** Personal or possessive pronouns (I, my, me, we, our) are not appropriate in a resume.
- **Proofread:** Spellcheck does not always catch typos. Have at least 2 other people proofread your resume. *Some employers will not consider a job candidate if they see even one typo on the resume.*
- **Highlight Accomplishments:** Don't just list your job duties, but explain what you accomplished in your positions/clinicals. Use action verbs, quantities, qualities, and details to describe not only what you did, but also how you did it.

What to Include:

HEADING

- Include name, mailing address, telephone number (home or mobile) and a professional email address.
- If you have a *complete and updated* LinkedIn profile, include the URL after your email address. Be sure to create a [customized URL under “Edit Profile”](#).

RESUME INTRODUCTION

- **Career Objective:** 2-3 sentence statement that provides an overview of your skills, experience, and professional goals. *Best for entry-level professionals.*
- **Professional Profile:** Combination of career objectives and stating a summary of qualifications. Can be formatted as a short paragraph, or bulleted list. Best for mid-level professionals with major achievements, or with a specialized expertise in respective field.

Remember: tailor the introduction to the job you're applying to.

EDUCATION

- **List all institutions and degrees:** Include dates of completion in reverse chronological order. Make sure to include study abroad or summer institutes.
- **GPA:** Including your GPA is optional, unless the employer requires you to do so. Standard practice is to only include GPA if over 3.2
- **Include academic accomplishments:** Research, special projects, presentations, and/or relevant thesis topics

CLINICAL ROTATIONS

- **If you are a new RN graduate:** prioritize your clinical experience by placing Clinical Rotations and any nursing related experience (CAN, Nursing Home Aide, etc.) toward the beginning of the resume.
- **Remember all new RN graduates completed clinical rotations:** find a way to make your rotational experience stand out.
- **Every Healthcare System is different:** try to find out from the recruiter before you apply if they would like you to include all your clinical rotations/hours on your resume or in a separate document.
- **Clinical Rotations to include:** as a rule of thumb, only include the relevant rotations per the position you are applying for. Include locations for your listed clinical rotations.

Example: Clinical Rotations on a Resume*

SETTING	LOCATION	SEMESTER/HOURS
Pediatrics, Intestinal Rehab	National Children's Medical Center	Fall 2015/Hours: 144
Pediatrics	National Children's Medical Center	Summer 2015/Hours: 440
Community Nursing	INOVA Loudoun Free Clinic	Summer 2015/Hours: 40
Obstetrics	INOVA Alexandria	Spring 2015/Hours: 40
Psychiatric Nursing	Virginia Hospital Center Medical-Surgery	Spring 2015/Hours: 40
Medical-Surgery	Virginia Hospital Center	Spring 2015/Hours: 84
Geriatrics	Fairfax Nursing Center	Fall 2016/Hours: 72

CLINICAL AND WORK EXPERIENCE

- **Include Clinical Experience and/or Related Experience first:** If you have clinical experience outside of your rotations include it in a "Clinical Experience" section directly after your clinical rotations. Following your clinical experience, include a "Work Experience" section including any specific work experiences you would like to highlight. This can certainly include jobs outside of the healthcare field.
- **Reverse Chronological Order:** Within both the Clinical Experience and Work Experience sections each experience should be listed in reverse chronological order (the most recent position first). Include the employer name, city and state, job title, and dates of employment.
- **Bullet points = accomplishments: As mentioned before,** don't just list job responsibilities in your bullet points. Show the results of your work and how it helped the organization.
- **Use Action Verbs:** Begin each bullet point with a strong action verb. Employers often scan the first few words of each bullet, so catch their attention with strong action verbs that reflect your relevant skills. *Do not use any action verb more than once under the same job. See Action Verbs list on page 5 of this guide for ideas.*
- **Highlight Transferable Skills:** These are skills that can be utilized in a wide variety of positions and settings. Examples: project management, teamwork, relationship-building, communication and leadership.
- **Be Creative:** Experience doesn't only include paid/professional work. You may also include leadership positions, volunteer work, course projects, presentations and relevant research.

**Examples of Clinical Rotation on Resume provided courtesy of George Washington University Yale School of Nursing Resume Guide*

SKILLS AND ACTIVITIES

- **Technical Skills:** list relevant computer applications, languages, and technical clinical skills from most unique to least unique.
- **Foundational Skills:** employers expect to see foundational skill sets mentioned within an applicant's resume.

(A nurse with an Advanced Degree may have the following foundational skills: assess patient conditions, manage lower level nurses and department, develop treatment plans and discuss and explain conditions to patient, oversee patient records, research and write publications relevant to specialization, educate patients or teach other nurses in a college or university)

- **Languages:** acceptable proficiency terms: native/bilingual; full professional proficiency/fluent; minimum professional proficiency/conversational, limited working proficiency, elementary/basic.
- **Affiliations:** list professional organizations and other community affiliations that support your career goals, including student organizations.
- **Volunteer:** List most recent and/or relevant activities first. In general, employers like to see some type of volunteer activity on the resume even if it's not directly related to the job you're applying for.
- **Certifications:** List most recent and/or relevant certifications first.

Writing Bullet Points as Accomplishment Statements

Bullet points under each position should tell a mini-story and are more effective when written as Accomplishment Statements. You should ensure that a reader understands in detail **what you did, why you did it, and what happened because of your actions**. Providing specific quantifiers and qualifiers will make your work and its results even more clear.

QUANTIFY RESULTS

As often as possible, use statistics, percentages, or numbers in your bullet points to demonstrate the scope of your accomplishments.

Examples: Delivered direct patient care to 12 patients while also managing the needs and questions of the patients' families. Collaborated with the Hospital Innovation Team to strategize an effective marketing plan to promote Rent the Runway to Hospital staff, resulting in a 55% increase in sales for the Annual Benefit Ball with over 60 dress rentals in January 2013.

QUALIFY RESULTS

Sometimes results aren't quantifiable, but can be illustrated with a qualitative outcome.

Examples: Worked with multidisciplinary clinical team to develop education and practical tool to improve correct screening for intimate partner violence on Labor and Delivery Unit. Tool recognized by top Hospital Administrators during monthly meeting.

Conducted qualitative interviews with key stakeholders at Rex Medical Center involved in clinical aspects of patient engagement. Developed SBAR and Bib list to summarize best practice communication techniques that empower providers to communicate more effectively with patients and families

Questions to ask yourself when creating Accomplishment Statements

Use the following questions to reflect on notable achievements of past positions:

- Did the work you performed positively impact the organization? If so, how?
- Did you make any significant clinical accomplishments that made an impact on your unit or organization?
- Who, or how many people, will ultimately benefit from your work?
- Did you identify any problems or challenges?
- Did you resolve or minimize any problems?
- Did you target a need for a product, service, plan, program, system, method, procedure, technique?
- Did you reduce costs, waste, time, or effort?
- Did you create any original works: reports, guides, manuals, proposals?
- Did you develop or design a new program, plan, service, product, process, project, system method, strategy?
- Did you improve (redesign, streamline or reorganize), administer, or implement any projects, plans, programs, processes, services, products?
- Did you make any recommendations that saved money, made money, increased efficiency or productivity?
- Did you make a technical or clinical contribution?
- Did you facilitate or improve communication among employees, with patients, or with the community?
- Did you train, coach, or mentor team members, patients or families?

ACTION VERBS by category (in CAPS)

ANALYZED	Consulted	Experimented	Promoted	Shared	Motivated	Cared	Exercised
Abstracted	Cooperated	Facilitated	Provided	Spoke	Negotiated	Catered	Expedited
Anticipated	Enlisted	Fashioned	Reduced	Stimulated	Persuaded	Delivered	Explained
Assessed	Ensured	Financed	Restored	Strengthened	Promoted	Dispensed	Facilitated
Ascertained	Facilitated	Fixed	Saved	Substituted	Reconciled	Entertained	Fostered
Audited	Fostered	Formulated	Stimulated	Supported	Resolved	Facilitated	Governed
Briefed	Handled	Founded	Strengthened	Sustained	Solved	Furnished	Guided
Calculated	Helped	Generated	Upgraded	Taught	ORGANIZED	Helped	Handled
Clarified	Located	Improved	COUNSELED/ INSTRUCTED/	Trained	Accumulated	Led	Headed
Compared	Participated	Increased	LEARNED	Tutored	Arranged	Listened	Hired
Computed	Preserved	Influenced	OPERATED/ MAINTAINED	Validated	Assembled	Maintained	Implemented
Concluded	Protected	Initiated	Adapted	Activated	Balanced	Motivated	Instructed
Conceptualized	Referred	Innovated	Advised	Built	Budgeted	Performed	Maintained
Correlated	Represented	Instituted	Advocated	Activated	Built	Prepared	Met
Criticized	Served	Integrated	Aided	Adjusted	Catalogued	Procured	Mentored
Debated	Strengthened	Introduced	Applied	Adapted	Clarified	Provided	Monitored
Defined	Summarized	Invented	Assessed	Changed	Classified	Raised	Motivated
Detected	Supported	Launched	Briefed	Clarified	Collated	Recommended	Navigated
Determined	Sustained	Marketed	Cared	Corrected	Collected	Represented	Ordered
Diagnosed	COMMUNICATED	Modeled	Clarified	Continued	Completed	Responded	Organized
Discriminated	Addressed	Modified	Coached	Edited	Compiled	Satisfied	Oversaw
Dissected	Advertised	Navigated	Comforted	Eliminated	Composed	Served	Planned
Estimated	Answered	Originated	Communicated	Executed	Coordinated	Stimulated	Prepared
Evaluated	Briefed	Perceived	Conducted	Expedited	Copied	Supplied	Presided
Examined	Corresponded	Performed	Consulted	Facilitated	Correlated	Supervised	Prioritized
Figured	Debated	Pioneered	Coordinated	Fixed	Detailed	SOLD	Promoted
Graded	Explained	Planned	Demonstrated	Implemented	Developed	Advertised	Regulated
Identified	Expressed	Prioritized	Educated	Installed	Displayed	Auctioned	Reinforced
Indexed	Facilitated	Produced	Emphasized	Modified	Edited	Bartered	Resolved
Inspected	Interpreted	Promoted	Enabled	Navigated	Facilitated	Enlisted	Retained
Integrated	Interviewed	Proposed	Encouraged	Ordered	Filed	Facilitated	Reviewed
Interpreted	Lectured	Recommended	Enlightened	Oversaw	Gathered	Generated	Scheduled
Interviewed	Listened	Restored	Established	Performed	Graphed	Improved	Selected
Inventoried	Marketed	Refined	Exercised	Prepared	Identified	Led	Set
Investigated	Prepared	Revamped	Explained	Piloted	Indexed	Maintained	Solved
Judged	Presented	Set	Facilitated	Preserved	Inspected	Marketed	Strengthened
Maintained	Printed	Shaped	Familiarized	Prioritized	Inventoried	Motivated	Supervised
Mapped	Programmed	Simplified	Fostered	Produced	Kept	Negotiated	Taught
Monitored	Publicized	Solved	Guided	Programmed	Located	Persuaded	Trained
Observed	Quoted	Styled	Helped	Promoted	Maintained	Promoted	Updated
Perceived	Recorded	Streamlined	Implemented	Protected	Mapped	Raised	COLLABORATE
Predicted	Reported	Substituted	Improved	Ran	Met	Recommended	Coproduced
Projected	Responded	Visualized	Influenced	Reduced	Obtained	Recruited	Cooperated
Qualified	Rewrote	IMPROVED/ INCREASED	Informed	Regulated	Organized	Stimulated	Engaged
Ranked	Spoke	Achieved	Inspired	Replaced	Planned	LED/MANAGED	Organized
Read	Taught	Achieved	Interpreted	Saved	Prepared	Allocated	Partnered
Reasoned	Wrote	Accomplished	Investigated	Screened	Prioritized	Approved	Met
Related	CREATED/ DEVELOPED	Acquired	Lectured	Serviced	Processed	Arranged	Participated
Researched	Acted	Advanced	Led	Set	Programmed	Assigned	Shared
Reviewed	Activated	Assured	Listened	Sustained	Ranked	Authorized	Strategized
Screened	Adapted	Attained	Maintained	Transported	Recorded	Chaired	Synchronized
Scanned	Adapted	Completed	Manipulated	Upheld	Reorganized	Clarified	Worked
Solved	Assembled	Conserved	Mastered	Utilized	Reproduced	Coached	
Studied	Authored	Continued	Monitored	NEGOTIATED	Retrieved	Conducted	
Summarized	Built	Eliminated	Modified	Advised	Revamped	Consulted	
Surveyed	Clarified	Encouraged	Motivated	Advocated	Reviewed	Contracted	
Symbolized	Composed	Enlarged	Observed	Arbitrated	Revised	Controlled	
Synthesized	Conceived	Expanded	Perceived	Bargained	Scheduled	Coordinated	
Tabulated	Constructed	Facilitated	Persuaded	Closed	Set	Decided	
Verified	Corrected	Fostered	Prescribed	Concluded	Simplified	Delegated	
Visualized	Designed	Guaranteed	Programmed	Consolidated	Solved	Directed	
ASSISTED	Devised	Inspired	Promoted	Dealt	Streamlined	Dispatched	
Advised	Discovered	Maximized	Read	Expedited	Structured	Distributed	
Brought	Drafted	Minimized	Reduced	Facilitated	Synthesized	Educated	
Chartered	Eliminated	Motivated	Reflected	Handled	Systemized	Encouraged	
Collaborated	Established	Obtained	Reinforced	Lobbied	Tabulated	Enforced	
Contributed	Expanded	Overcame	Related	Mediated	SERVED/ AIDED	Evaluated	
Consolidated	Expedited	Perfected	Restored	Merged	Attended	Executed	

* Extensive list of action verbs provided courtesy of George Washington University.