GEARE up Your Resume

A practical guide to crafting your resume

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Contents

Why should you read this guide?

Are you looking to further enhance your resume and stand out from the crowd to get your internship/full time offers? This guide will help you do so!


Here you can see how I transformed my resume over 4 years. This resume still has plenty of room for improvement but so far it has helped me land interviews with companies across several industries and locations ranging from US, Singapore, UK, Japan, and Germany.

You may be wondering; this guide is TOO LONG and it will take too much time. Hear me out. If you read this from start to finish, this guide is the only resource you need to refer back to. Nothing else. Why?

I'm very grateful and happy to provide you a highly condensed package of valuable advice collected over the last 4 years from peers, faculty, employers, online resources, etc. If you carefully read and IMPLEMENT what is shared, I guarantee you will see a drastic change in your resume!

| Networking | Resume Cover letter Screening | Multiple Interviews | Offer! |
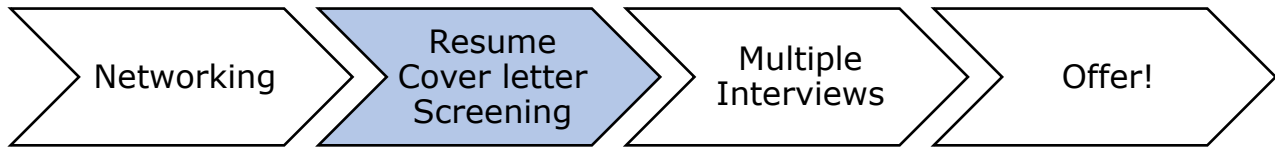
Keep in mind this is just one of many things you need to get right to land your internship/fulltime offer. Here, we focus purely on your resume. Before we get started, take a look at what students have to say after transforming their resume through pure implementation using this guide!

Testimonials

"This guide helped me look at a different perspective by transforming activities I had previously disregarded into valuable experiences." -Nick IE Class of 2022

"After reading the guide, I changed almost every line of my resume. It enabled me to communicate the complexity of my experiences in a simple format that speaks the language of recruiters." -Ben CmpE Class of 2022

I found the guide to be very helpful with my resume, particularly when it came to organization. It also helped me show my skills from simple jobs like working as a barista. I was a bit unsure where to place some contents on my resume and you helped me find the places best fit to make a bigger impact on employers.

-Rachel ME Class of 2023

The 5 golden steps

In crafting a resume, there are 5 steps you should take.

1. Tell yourself you have what it takes!
2. Think about what employers want
3. Lay out the end product of your resume (resume template)
4. Reflect on your experiences
5. Fill out your bullet points

Tell yourself you have what it takes!

All too often, we think we aren't good enough for the company/job posting. Before even thinking about writing a resume, you first need to get into the right mindset. Every single one of you has something unique to offer. Acknowledge the fact that you are capable of doing amazing things and that you have what it takes! You may not realize "how" you're amazing but let's leave that for step 4. Before we get ahead of ourselves, let's take a look at step 2: what employers want to see.

Think about what employers want

Employers will be asking themselves the key question:

"Do I want you on my team?"

We have to get them to say "YES, I WANT HIM/HER!" but how do we do that? It's simpler than you think. You give them what they want. Well, what exactly do they want? Take a look at the figure on the next page.

Employers look for students who are competent to do the job with passion. Who doesn't want a highly motivated student that can get things done? It is your job to prove that you are competent on paper (resume). Showing your passion is done more in the cover letter and your interviews. So now that you know what employers are looking for and the type of skills you need to display in your resume, let's move on to step 3 and see how you can create a layout to sell yourself in a concise manner.

Things Employers look for

- Passion
  - Interest in the company
    - Overall mission
    - Interest in the department
  - Interests at school
    - Academics
    - Extra curriculars
  - Personal interests
    - Hobbies
    - Side project
- Competency
  - Technical Skills
    - Problem solving
    - Knowledge
  - Soft Skills
    - Leadership
    - Communication
    - Team work
    - Coachability

Cover Letter
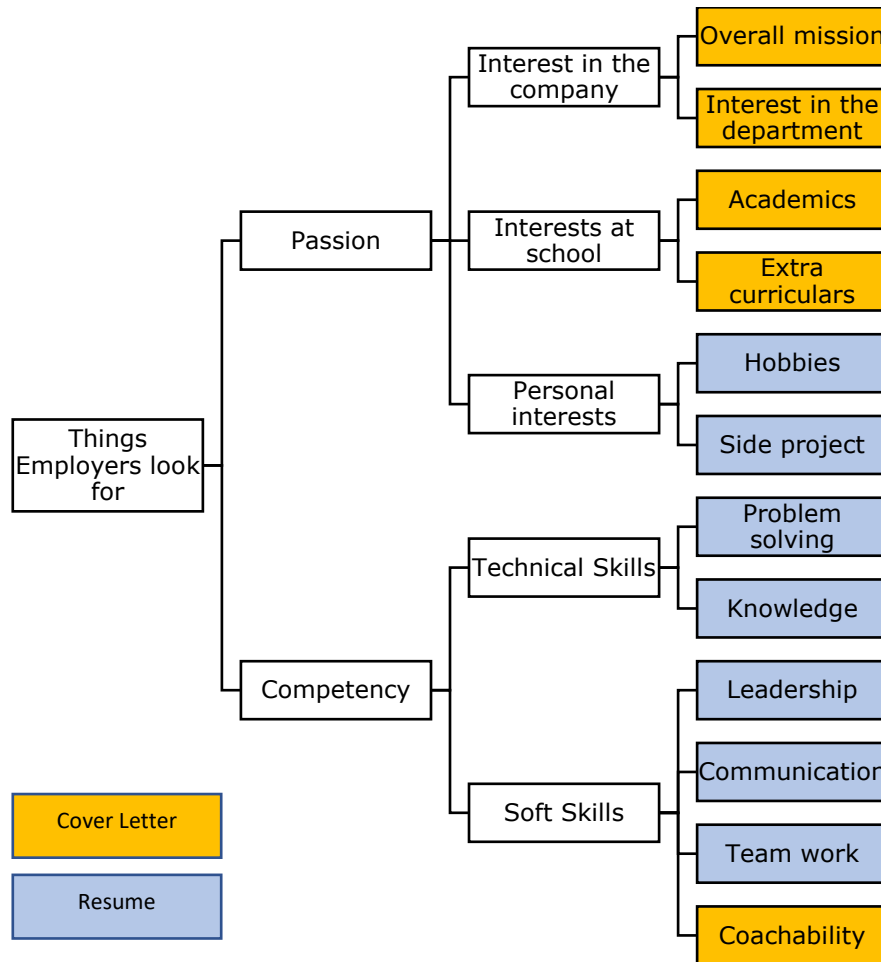
Resume

Lay out the end product of your resume (free resume template)

Before thinking about your experiences, it is best to envision what the end product will look like. By having a clear end goal and creating the framework upfront, it will be easier for you to fill out the content later on.

We recommend a 1-page layout with the section titles in the given order:

- Education
- Work/Project Experience
- Leadership/Extracurricular Activities
- Additional Information

This will make sure you cover all the skills mentioned on the tree on page 5. We highly recommend at least a font size of 10.5 with sans-serif such as Calibri. Sans-serif fonts are simple and easy to read. Make sure you fit each bullet point on one line. You need to ensure the reviewer can navigate your resume easily. Simplicity is king! You will find detailed examples under the case study section. You can access a resume template here for reference.

Reflect on your experiences

Take a step back and think about all the amazing experiences you've had. This is one of the most important sections in this guide. Not only is this a way for you to reflect on your past experiences, it is a great time to understand what you're doing well so far and where you need to further develop as a professional.

Download the brainstorming document here. Go ahead and list out all your accomplishments during your internships, projects, campus involvement, and awards. Achievements from high school should reduce as you get more involved in campus/projects etc. If you feel there are some points worth mentioning that relates to the job, feel free to put them in.

Work Experience

- Company Name 1:
- Job role:
- Dates [mm/yyyy-mm/yyyy]:

Accomplishments		
Tasks	Result (What did you achieve?)	Process (How did you achieve it?)
Task 1		
Task 2		
Task 3		

Brainstorming Template Screenshot

Notice how for each accomplishment, there are two components: result and process. This helps you think what you achieved for every task you did and how you achieved it. Ideally, you will be able to quantify the impact you made.

Now, it is time to prioritize and down select the experiences that display the key skills employers are looking for, i.e. the tree on page 5. Keep in mind even if you have an experience with an undesirable RESULT, you can always emphasize the PROCESS and sell that characteristic instead. A criterion you should be using to downselect your experiences is to focus on the requirements/preferred qualifications of the specific position you're applying to. Look at the skills they want you to have and make sure your experiences clearly reflect them.

Now that you have brainstormed your story, the next step is to formulate them into effective bullet points and complete the resume template that you have from the previous section.

Fill out your bullet points

When filling out your bullet points, try to limit each activity to 3 bullet points. There is a concept called "Rule of Three". This is where the human mind enjoys thinking in patterns and 3 is the lowest figure to form patterns in our head. Having 3 bullet points rather than 4 or 5 for each experience will make it easier for the employers to skim through your resume.

When it comes to filling your bullet points, always use the following format.

$$Result\ (action\ verb, past\ tense, quantify) + "by" + Process$$

Start with the impact you made and explain how you achieved the result. Take a look at an example below.

International Student Peer Coaching Program, Purdue University	Indiana, US | 03/2016 – 12/2017
Internal Director	

- **Advised 200+ international students** transition to college through a 15-page information packet and 1-1 counseling
- Supported 50+ students with career search by hosting the first Minority Engineering Networking event

The key is to start strong. Make sure you start each point with an action verb (past tense) and quantify the result. In other words, tell the employers "what" impact you brought, by "how much," and "how" you approached it. The key to choosing the right action verb is to think about the specific skill you want to convey in each bullet point.

When forming your bullet point, make sure you are marketing your skills as opposed to providing incorrect information. For each bullet point, only write activities you actively participated in, and were a part of. In other words, for every bullet point, you should be able to articulate what you did and how you contributed when asked by the recruiter.

Action Verbs			
Increased	Led	Created	Persuaded
Managed	Coordinated	Implemented	Secured
Handled	Communicated	Supported	Advised
Oversaw	Developed	Enhanced	Recommended
Produced	Improved	Reduced	

Quantifying phrases
% term (by 40%)
Time (e.g. 3 weeks)
term (250 students)
$ term ($2M)

Case Study

Here, we will take you through how Nick (IE Class of 2022) transformed his resume from "good" to "amazing" with a detailed process for each section.

Good (resume)

Home: XXX
XXX
Current: XXX
XXX

Experience

Urban Sustainability Modeling & Analysis Team — West Lafayette, IN
Smart Transport & Shared Mobility - Undergraduate Student Researcher — *Summer 2019 – Present*
- Investigating an agent-based EV AV ride sharing vehicle taxi model in New York City
- Analyzed using R, Unix, and big data statistical analysis
- Optimizing a charging function using design of experiments to analyze two factor interactions

Urban Sustainability Modeling & Analysis Team — West Lafayette, IN
AV Economic Adoption Replacement Analysis - Undergraduate Student Researcher — *Fall 2019 – Present*
- Evaluating car replacement and purchase decisions over to model the timeframe on adoption of AV/EV vehicles
- Modeled using R and various different government data sets
- Utilized qualitative and quantitative analysis on owned vehicles annual cost relative to the EUAC of a new car

Projects

Probability and Statistics in Engineering — West Lafayette, IN
Roadside Fatalities — *Spring 2020*
- Identified significance between location of number of miles driven, and number of roadside fatalities
- Explored and identified best variable relationships using linear regression analysis using Minitab

Honors Intro to Engineering Design — West Lafayette, IN
Mechanical and Program Design — *Fall 2018 – Sp...*
- Developed multiple iterations of autonomous rovers and of Python code using Raspberry Pi and NXT sensors
- Utilized feedback control and confidence intervals to establish accurate turning with a confidence of 95%
- Printed 3D portions of the rover utilizing AutoCad 360

Leadership Experience

Global Engineering Alliance for Research & Education (GEARE) — West Lafayette, IN
Vice President of External Affairs — *Fall 2018 – Present*
- Enhanced brand awareness by maintaining social media such as LinkedIn, and Instagram
- Organized a variety of student events of up to 60 attendees

Purdue Varsity Glee Club — West Lafayette, IN
Tenor II, Advancement Committee — *Fall 2018 – Present*
- Professional performer in 20+ shows per year both domestically and internationally

Education

Purdue University, School of Industrial Engineering — GPA:XXX/4.00
Major: Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering with Honors — May 2022
Minor: Economics, Global Engineering Studies (Japanese)
Certifications and Achievements: Lean Green Belt | National Hispanic Foundation Scholar | NSF LSAMP Scholarship

Skills

Language skills: English (native) | Portuguese (native) | Spanish (Advanced) | Japanese (Basic)
Technical skills: R | Python | MATLAB | Minitab | Unix | VI Text Editor

Amazing (resume)

xxx@purdue.edu — (xxx) xxx-xxx

Education
Purdue University, BSc Industrial Engineering — West Lafayette, IN | May 2022
Minor: Economics, Global Engineering Studies (Japanese) — GPA: xxx/4.00
Achievements: Lean Green Belt | National Hispanic Foundation Scholar ($8,000) | NSF Scholarship ($4,000)

Research Experience
Urban Sustainability Modeling & Analysis Team — West Lafayette, IN
Smart Transport Research Intern — 05/2019 – Present
- Investigated the impact of charging efficiency on a shared mobility network in New York City
- Reduced vehicle charging frequency 2-fold using R, DoE, and statistical analysis
- Optimized a binary function by 43% by reducing and merging several variables

AV Economic Feasibility Research Intern — 08/2019 – Present
- Modeled Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of seven vehicle configurations with varying AV adoption rates
- Improved model granularity by increasing TCO parameter options
- Conveyed findings of equivalent uniform cash flow analysis on 850,000+ AV/ICE/EV entries to colleague

Work Experience
Maruichi USA Inc. — Rockville, MD
System Administrator — 06/2018 – 12/2018
- Increased delivery sales by 15x by developing and integrating an online store
- Developed relationships with 250+ multicultural customers in four different languages
- Revamped a bilingual digital inventory system to support the online store

...mércio e Representações Ltda — São Paulo, BR
Exec... Assistant Intern — 06/2016 – 08/2016
- Ensured timely financial transactions by tracking invoices using the Brazilian banking system
- Advised founder to implement practices to reduce paper consumption by 20%

Engineering Projects
Honors Engineering Design — West Lafayette, IN
Product Developer — 08/2018 – 05/2019
- Developed hardware and Python code to navigate a maze within strictly set wall distance constraints
- Improved turning precision by 30% and achieved 95% accuracy established by confidence intervals
- Placed 3rd/85 teams in the category of accuracy by designing a catapult to launch projectiles

Leadership and Extracurricular Activities
Global Engineering Alliance for Research & Education (GEARE) — West Lafayette, IN
Vice President of External Affairs — 01/2020 – Present
- Increased member participation 3-fold by establishing communication infrastructure via Slack
- Expanded community network amongst alumni, faculty, and students through bi-semester newsletters
- Assisted 50+ students to decide their study abroad location by organizing and facilitating a senior panel

Purdue Varsity Glee Club — West Lafayette, IN
Tenor II Vocalist, Advancement Committee — 08/2018 – Present
- Dedicated 8 hours/week preparing for 26 shows across the US and the UK for 30,000+ people
- Created relationships with patrons via letter writing, performances, and frequent in-person interactions

Additional Information
Technical skills: R (6hrs/wk: Designed buy/sell stock indicator) | Python | Minitab (Regression Analysis) | VI Text Editor
Interests: Soccer (Chelsea FC/Brazil National Team), Acapella (Won two HS regional competitions), Geopolitics
Language skills: English (native) | Portuguese (native) | Spanish (advanced) | Japanese (basic)

The question you should constantly ask yourself when making changes is

"How can I make this even more amazing?"

For each bullet point, be aware of the skill you are displaying! As you improve various elements, take a 3-step process shown below.

Brainstorm → Downselect → Add amazingness
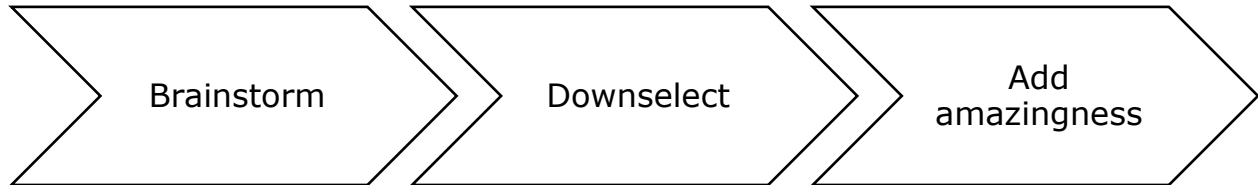
Let's take a look at the thought process Nick went through to transform his resume and practical tips you can use through your journey!

Research Experiences

When including bullet points for your research experience, you may be wondering "how can I sell this well?" Here is how Nick used his 3 bullet points to showcase his skills through research experience.

- What he did (high level overview) High level thinking
- Amazing improvements he made Problem Solving
- How he communicated findings Communication

AV Economic Feasibility Research Intern	08/2019 – Present
• Modeled Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) of seven vehicle configurations with varying AV adoption rates	
• Improved model granularity by increasing TCO parameter options	
• Conveyed findings of equivalent uniform cash flow analysis on 850,000+ AV/ICE/EV entries to colleague	

High school Experiences

If you don't have enough work/project experiences yet, you can always tie in meaningful job shadowing you did during high school. Initially, Nick didn't think his job shadowing experience at a supply chain logistics company in high school would add value to the resume. After reflecting hard, he did find something and this is what he came up with for one of his points.

- *Advised founder to implement practices to reduce paper consumption by 20%*

What did he do? During his work experience, he noticed that his boss (founder) was always printing out an electronic document his subordinates sent him. The root cause was he was unfamiliar with the capabilities and usage of the software program. Therefore, Nick taught the founder how to use it and helped him reduce the number of printed pages from ~200 pages/month to ~160 pages. The way he summarized and phrased this experience in one line shows how "amazing" of a job he did.

Leadership/Extracurricular

In this section, you want to craft bullet points that will bring out both the impact you made and your soft skill attributes including team work, leadership, and effective communication etc. As an example, this is how Nick displayed those skills.

Organization involvement

Global Engineering Alliance for Research & Education (GEARE) — West Lafayette, IN
Vice President of External Affairs — 01/2020 – Present

Impact • Increased member participation 3-fold by establishing communication infrastructure via Slack
Teamwork • Expanded community network amongst alumni, faculty, and students through bi-semester newsletters
Active Listener • Assisted 50+ students to decide their study abroad location by organizing and facilitating a senior panel

Clubs

Purdue Varsity Glee Club   West Lafayette, IN
Tenor II Vocalist, Advancement Committee   08/2018 – Present

Dedication • Dedicated 8 hours/week preparing for 26 shows across the US and the UK for 30,000+ people
Communication • Created relationships with patrons via letter writing, performances, and frequent in-person interactions

Action verbs such as "dedicated", "created", "built" are powerful verbs to show your strong passion, commitment and interpersonal skills.

Additional information

Technical Skills

Pick 3,4 skills and be specific. There are two ways you can display your proficiency. You can either provide the amount of time you've spent using the language/system or you can give specific examples of the usage. Typically, students list out too many programming languages/operating systems they are familiar with. You cannot differentiate yourself this way and recruiters won't know *how* proficient you are. Here's how Nick transformed his technical skills.

Brainstorm	R | Python | MATLAB | Minitab | Unix | VI Text Editor
Downselect	R | Python | Minitab | VI Text Editor
Add amazingness	R (6hrs/wk: Designed buy/sell stock indicator) | Python | Minitab (Regression Analysis) | VI Text Editor

Iteration process to add amazingness:

1. Beat the market using R library packages to buy/sell stock indicators
2. Calculated weighted variable signaling buy/sell stock indicators
3. Analyzed market by determining buy/sell stock indicators
4. Indicated buy/sell places in stock model
5. Designed buy/sell stock indicator

Interests

Brainstorm	Soccer, Singing, Piano, Coding, Tennis, Geopolitics
Downselect	Soccer, Singing, Geopolitics
Add amazingness	Soccer (Chelsea FC/Brazil National Team), Acapella (Won two HS regional competitions), Geopolitics

Why should you add your hobbies and be specific? The reason is two-fold. First, you will add individuality and uniqueness to your resume. It "humanizes" the paper. This is normal practice in Europe but not so much in the US yet. It is another way of differentiating yourself from the crowd. Second, it is a great conversation starter! The world is such a small place. Often times, your recruiter happens to have a common interest as you do and it is a great way to build up the relationship and connect on a personal

level. Remember, recruiters are humans too! They also have hobbies they love to talk about.

Extra tips

To really stand out when talking to a recruiter, one thing that is extremely powerful is linking your experiences to the company's overall mission/operation. Let's see how one can do so using their language proficiency as an example.

"[Company name] operates globally in locations such as [a,b,c] and I will be of great asset to your team as I interact with key local stakeholders for projects including [x,y,z] by leveraging my language skills in [language]."

Final remarks

Congratulations! Thank you for making it this far. Hopefully you found this guide useful and I hope you will start taking action NOW to embark on your journey to transform your resume. Always remember, incremental improvement is what matters and most importantly, enjoy the journey. We wish you the best of luck. If you have any further questions/suggestions, feel free to reach out via [LinkedIn](#).

FAQ

General

Q1.   Should I include an objective section?

Generally, we do not see the value of adding an objective section unless you are applying in general terms rather than to a specific position.

Q2.   Is it okay to include colors on a resume as a way to make it pop or would that be unprofessional?

We recommend you keep your resume to one color. We want to keep the recruiter focused on your content as much as we can.

Q3.   Should I follow a template from Word/Google Docs or would that diminish the uniqueness of my resume?

As long as you can get your recruiter to stay focused on the content, a template is great. To access a sample template, follow the link [here](#).

Q4.   Why don't you have periods for every bullet point?

You want the recruiter to only focus on the content of the bullet point. By removing the period, it will make things easier visually for them!

Bullet points

Q1.   If I have some longer experiences but do not have many of them, should I include more than 3 bullet points to discuss those in depth?

Ideally, you would break the experience up into 2,3 sections if you worked on different projects. If not, try to keep the number of points under 5.

Q2.   Do I always have to quantify?

No, there will be times it won't make sense to add quantified metrics. You won't have numbers but the overarching format must stay the same.

Education

Q1.   Should I include a relevant coursework section?

It could be added to your education section if you have some space. Only add them in if they are relevant to the position you are applying for.

Q2.   Should I include anything other than my major, minors, and GPA?

Relevant coursework, scholarships/awards can be added here too.

Work / Project experience

Q1.   How do I sell my international experience?

Mention your study abroad and minor in global engineering studies under "education", your work experience abroad, and intercultural training under "additional information"

Q2.   Should I include projects from my coursework here or in education?

If you spent a significant amount of time and were heavily involved, it can go under this section. This would apply especially if you have less work/practical experience.

Q3.   Can I include content from high school?

Yes, however as you partake in various activities on campus, you should remove most of your high school content on your resume.

Leadership / Extracurricular experience

Q1.   What if I don't have any leadership experience?

You do! At one point or another, all of us have taken ownership through projects, a sports team, or an individual task. Give yourself some time to think deeply about this.

Should project based extracurriculars be included here or under projects?

They should fall under extracurriculars. Projects that you did for coursework/research should go under "projects".

Additional Information

Q1. What kind of content should be included here?

Examples include but are not limited to technical skills, hobbies, languages, achievements/awards.