**II. Preparing an Effective Résumé**

A targeted résumé is your key to landing a job interview. Recruiters and managers receive hundreds—even thousands—of résumés. If your résumé has errors, is difficult to read, or is too general, you probably won’t get an interview. To make sure you get that call, review the following tips on writing your résumé:

**A. Tips**

**The Basics**

* Because you are a student or a recent graduate, keep your résumé to only one page.
* Print your résumé on high-quality, heavy bond résumé paper in white, ivory, or gray.
* Use only black ink.
* Use font sizes no smaller than 10 points and no larger than 13 points. The only exceptions should be your name (which may be larger) and your address (which may be smaller).
* Keep margins between one-half inch and 1 inch on all sides.
* Ask three to five people to serve as your references, and list their names and contact information on a separate matching page with your name and address heading.
* Use a word-processing program (like Word or WordPerfect), which allows more flexibility in formatting than résumé-writing programs.
* Avoid using the word "I." Write in fragments rather than complete sentences.

**The Content**

* The reader should find your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address before anything else. (If you include both current and permanent contact information, indicate when to use each one.)
* The "Objective" tells the reader why he or she has your résumé. Avoid clichés like "Seeking an entry-level position with room for advancement that utilizes my skills and interests." Use your objective to tell the reader, in very few words, what you want. "An entry-level position in tax accounting for a Big 5 public accounting firm" is a stronger objective.
* The "Education" section should come next because that is the most valuable asset college students have to offer potential employers. List your school and its location, your major, the degree you’re working toward, your GPA if it’s better than 3.0, and your expected graduation date.
* The "Experience" section should include your previous employment in reverse chronological order(that is, you should begin with your current or most recent job). List your title, your employer and its location, and your dates of employment. Select three to five bullet points to describe your responsibilities and accomplishments at the job. If possible, list achievements in measurable ways, such as "Increased sales by 45% and was named Salesperson of the Month." The "Experience" section can also include nonpaying activities or volunteer experiences, such as serving as president of a sorority or managing the campus radio station. It can also be broken out into categories (see [Making a Good Résumé Great](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech/content/cat_060/02-Preparinganeffectiveresume.htm?v=chapter&i=01060.03&s=01000&n=00060&o=|00510|00520|00550|00560|00570|00580|00030|00930|01000|99000|00010|00040|00050|00060|00530|#goodresume)).
* "Activities," or "Leadership," is an important section to employers. They want to see that you’ve taken an active role in your current company—your campus. List the names of organizations you’ve been involved with, dates of involvement, and any offices held. List responsibilities and achievements if applicable.
* The "Skills" section is the place to list computer and language skills.
* Use the "Awards/Recognition" section to list any honors or scholarships.
* "References available upon request" signals the reader that this is the end of the résumé, so if you have room, include this line. It’s not a required part of the résumé though, so if you are running short on space, this should be the first part to go.

**Making a Good Résumé Great**

* Write each résumé with a specific objective in mind. The biggest mistake made by unsuccessful job seekers is submitting the same general résumé for all the positions to which they are applying. Tailor each résumé to each job.
* Balance your text and white space. A résumé that is appealing to the eye is likely to be read more thoroughly. Use bold to emphasize important items in your text. Italics are also acceptable, if used sparingly. Underlining and "all caps" are most difficult to read.
* A "Related Coursework" section, inserted just below the "Education" section, can flesh out an otherwise short résumé. If you are applying for an internship, listing related coursework also allows the reader to understand how far along you are in your program.
* A "Related Experience" section, appearing just before an "Other Experience" section, includes jobs and internships specifically related to your objective. This section highlights experiences that otherwise would be buried in the general experience section.
* Make sure there are no errors or typos. Have several people review your résumé, including someone at your campus career-services office, to ensure you haven’t missed anything.

**B. Sample Résumés**

Consulting these [sample student résumés](http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/alredtech/content/cat_060/SampleStudentResumes.doc) may help you get started on your own résumé. For additional samples, visit the [Model Documents Gallery](http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/modeldocs).

**C. Links**

The following Web sites offer additional résumé advice and samples:

AfterCollege.com: [www.thejobresource.com/career/resumetips.asp](http://www.thejobresource.com/career/resumetips.asp)

CollegeGrad.com: [www.collegegrad.com/resumes/resumes.shtml](http://www.collegegrad.com/resumes/resumes.shtml)

JobStar.com: [jobstar.org/tools/resume/index.cfm](http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/index.cfm)

Monster.com’s Résumé Builder: [content.monster.com/resume/samples/resumes/](http://content.monster.com/resume/samples/resumes/)