

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

RESUME GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Currently, two key career branding platforms exist: the resume and the LinkedIn profile. Both are indispensable parts of the job search or career advancement process and require time and effort. This guide provides up-to-date best practices and step-by-step instructions for building and communicating your career brand in your resume.

There are four critical elements to any effective resume:

- Clear promise of value
- Defined target
- Result focused
- Accurate use of keywords

Remember that a successful resume is a tailored highlight reel, NOT a detailed map of your workflow and responsibilities!

CLEAR PROMISE OF VALUE

A brand is a promise of value. Consider how you communicate your promise of value to a prospective employer in your resume. The profusion of large job boards, individual professional websites, blogs, social media promotion, and large-scale Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) has resulted in an increasingly competitive market for job seekers.



It's critical to include the following three key components in the professional summary at the beginning of your resume:

- Professional identity — who are you?
- Skills and background — as it relates to the specific company and target position
- Results

Another way to think of this is to answer WHO, WHAT, WHY, and HOW. These frameworks should result in a concise and direct professional summary, 1-3 sentences long, or 2-5 lines of text.

EXAMPLE:


Analytical operations leader (PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY/WHO) who thrives in complex supply chain manufacturing environments (BACKGROUND/WHAT) to consistently improve process performance and profitability (RESULT/WHY) through Lean Six Sigma Black Belt expertise (HOW).

DEFINED TARGET



The best resumes (and LinkedIn profiles) have a defined theme that signals a clear career target. A cohesive picture emerges for a specific industry/sector and function when reviewed. The document shouldn't read as an all-inclusive biography of everything you've done, thus differing from a Curriculum Vitae. Emphasize critical skills or experiences and exclude or play down aspects of past work experience unrelated to your target. Some ways include adjusting your professional summary and placing the most relevant bullets in your experience section first.

If you're job-hopping or attempting a drastic career change, a layout highlighting certain skills or areas may be a functional format. It will allow you to create a stronger theme and emphasize transferable skills and strengths (see sample functional resume on the last page of this guide).



Our **Career Change Guide** (<https://alumni.umich.edu/career/career-guides/changing-careers/>) includes additional advice and resources for those looking to change careers.

TAKING AIM WITH THE PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Your summary should illustrate your desired job goal without stating it in the outdated "objective statement" format. Below are two professional summary examples that a candidate might use depending on the job they are applying for..

EXAMPLE ONE (APPLYING FOR TEACHING POSITION):

Educator and developer with four years of experience as a junior high classroom teacher in a complex urban setting. Expert skills in curriculum development that provide instruction supported by standards, aligning technology use with pedagogy, assessment best practices, classroom management, and peer mentorship. Student learning under personal leadership indicates improved literacy and grades.

EXAMPLE TWO (APPLYING FOR A SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR POSITION):

Four-year career as an educational leader and practitioner. Possesses conceptual tools foundational to understanding education, experience handling complex social and educational challenges in urban settings, and management competencies to achieve positive, sustainable organizational change.

RESULTS FOCUSED

Most individuals prefer a reverse chronological resume format, with the experience section in reverse chronological order (most recent position listed first) and a bulleted format. Individuals making a career change or returning to the workforce after an extended break may prefer a functional format. While this guide focuses primarily on the reverse chronological format, examples of both are at the end of the guide.

The “Work Experience” section should not simply consist of statements of your responsibilities. Craft your experience bullets by focusing on the action undertaken (past tense), the context in which they occur (think about who, how many, what, where), and what that work resulted in. Use the ACTION-CONTEXT-RESULT format. Great experience bullets will answer the question, “Why did my organization pay me to do this?”



HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTION-CONTEXT-RESULT FRAMEWORK:

- **BEFORE:** Liaison between customers and sales management.
- **AFTER:** Coordinated (ACTION) over 10 company relationships between customers and sales management (CONTEXT), increasing market share of petroleum product line by 25% and return business by 50% (RESULT).

ACCURATE USE OF KEYWORDS

Display your industry understanding and ensure you pass Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), especially in large organizations, using keywords and terminology from intended job descriptions, industry associations, and industry- or career-related discussion forums (e.g., LinkedIn Groups). These keywords, including the professional summary, skills, and work experience sections, can be implemented throughout your resume.



APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM (ATS):

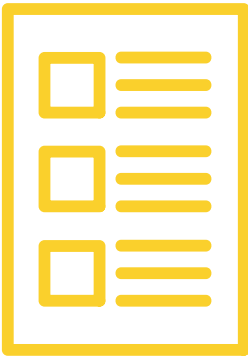


An Applicant Tracking System (ATS) is any software application that enables the electronic handling of recruitment and hiring needs. Large organizations that receive many resumes (e.g., Google has reported they receive 40,000+ applications a week) utilize ATS to provide an initial screening of submitted resumes. More than 90% of companies will use an Artificial Intelligence (AI) reader to scan resumes before moving to a hiring manager or recruiter.

EXAMPLE:

A person applying for a position in senior brand management needs to ensure that their experience is described in the specific terms in the job posting, whether it be “brand equity building,” “communication and media planning,” “new product development and launch,” or “marketing strategy.” Though the applicant may have their own terminology for these skills, their resume **MUST** match the language used by the company and recruiter.

FORMATTING BEST PRACTICES



Finally, you should proofread the document multiple times, ensure it doesn't contain any errors or typos, and be visually pleasing with adequate white space to allow easy reading. Stick with widely used fonts (Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, etc.) between 10- and 12-point. Resumes should have black text on a white background, with a minimum of half-inch margins. To prevent misreading from an ATS, ensure your resume is ONE column (this applies to all sections, including skills/additional info). Lastly, we recommend the document be one page, at most two (optional for those with 10-plus years of work experience), unless a high-profile executive with more than 25 years of experience.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER: STEP-BY-STEP

1 | HEADER

- Address is permanent/updated. A specific address is not needed, but be sure to include the city and state.
- Email address should be simple and professional (avoid slang); ensure the email address does not expire.
- If possible, include a customized LinkedIn URL or professional website — avoid hyperlinking text as ATS readers cannot read hyperlinks.



2 | PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- Your statement should include professional identity, skills and background, and results/value proposition, followed by a list of core competencies.
- Signals clear intent/target
 - Students, recent grads, or career changers should focus on “aspirational” intent

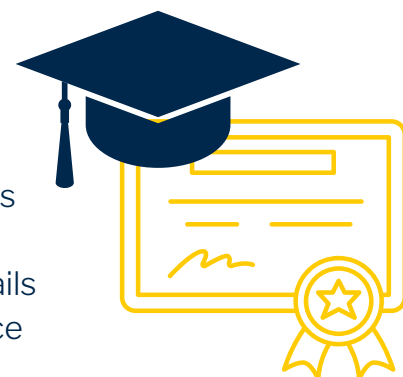
3 | EXPERIENCE

- This is the most essential part of the resume — it should occupy at least one-third of the page and, ideally, two-thirds
- For a standard resume:
 - Display in reverse chronological order
 - Ideally, work experience should display a sense of progression
- For a functional format resume (a format option for those with gaps in employment or those undertaking significant career changes), identify 3-4 key functions, skill areas, and group related accomplishments under these in bullet format.
- Each position should be listed with your title first, followed by your organization/employer.
- Remember to use the ACTION-CONTEXT-RESULTS format for effective experience bullets.



4 | EDUCATION

- List education after work experience
 - Students about to graduate and very recent grads can list education prior to the work experience section
- Write degree in full (e.g., Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts)
- If your degree is general, include specialization or emphasis
- Include the month and year of graduation; if more than ten years out, simply include the year
- Those with over 15-20 years of experience should exclude details of academic or leadership performance (leadership performance should already be indicated through work experience bullets)
- Recent graduates can include volunteer, academic, and leadership performance
- If more than three years post-graduation, don't include a GPA (optional for those less than three years from graduation; it depends on industry standards)



5 | ADDITIONAL

- Technical skills and software proficiencies (unless in an IT field, in which case these should be listed as a core competency in the professional summary)
- Language proficiency and international experience
- Professional organizations/memberships; leadership and volunteer experience
- Skills summary can also be at the top of the resume, under the professional summary — look to align skills with keywords in target jobs
 - Skills summary should focus on objective skills rather than subjective ones (e.g., PMP Certified, Python vs. detail-oriented, team player)

EXAMPLE RESUME

PUTTING THE FRAMEWORKS TO USE

The target signaled in the professional summary is substantiated by progressive bullets, demonstrating a clear theme/professional brand.

MAIZE A. BLUE

City, STATE Zip | 999.999.9999 | emailaddress@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/maize-blue

Educator and Developer (PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY/WHO) with eight years of experience as high school classroom English teacher in a complex urban setting. Expert skills in curriculum development that provides instruction supported by standards, aligning technology with pedagogy, assessment best practices, classroom management, and peer mentorship (SKILLS/BACKGROUND). Student learning under leadership (HOW) indicated improved literacy and grades (RESULTS/WHY).

Technology Integration, Curriculum Implementation, Curriculum Creation,
Differentiated Instruction and Assessment

EXPERIENCE

10th Grade Teacher

Huron High School, Ann Arbor Public Schools

Ann Arbor, MI

2017-present

- Created (ACTION) two vlog and blog-based language arts curricula for grades 10 and 11 (CONTEXT) to meet expected schoolwide learning results for Eastern Association of Schools and Colleges 2018/19 accreditation (RESULT).

ACTION-CONTEXT-RESULTS framework is clear and the language/keywords used displays an industry understanding.

EXAMPLE RESUME

REVERSE CHRONOLOGICAL FORMAT

SALLY SAMPLE

City, STATE Zip | 999.999.9999 | emailaddress@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/sally-sample

CAREER PROFILE

Experienced administrative assistant with five years of cumulative experience in higher education administration, including extensive background in event planning, budget management, teamwork, and Microsoft Office Suite.

EXPERIENCE

Experienced administrative assistant with five years of cumulative experience in higher education administration, including extensive background in event planning, budget management, teamwork, and Microsoft Office Suite

Administrative Assistant Intermediate Ann Arbor, MI
University of Michigan, Ross School of Business 2020-2022

- Managed standard student requests concerning credit increase questions, class additions, and graduation documentation through Maize, resulting in improved processes for student academic requirements
- Handled planning and implementation of workshops and various large-scale student events including room reservations, catering, email reminders, and attendance data
- Mentored two other administrative assistants in understanding student academic requests and various filing systems resulting the efficient operation of student and supervisor requests, data tracking and improved team morale
- Managed departmental budget, tracking of P-card expenses in Concur

Administrative Assistant Intermediate Ann Arbor, MI
University of Michigan Medical School 2019-2020

- Crafted and managed itineraries for visiting medical students, researchers, and dignitaries including housing, travel, and hospital tours issuing Memorandums of Understand with universities in China and Ghana
- Established and maintained data tracking global relationship for medical faculty research and service collaboration
- Observed, and noted training needs for new hires resulting in adjustments to onboarding programs for improved employee retention

Volunteer Substitute Teacher Irvine, CA
Woodward School 2017-2018

- Prepared and taught junior high school and high school classes in English and English as a Second Language

EDUCATION

University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI
Bachelor of Arts, College of Literature, Science and the Arts May 2016

- Majored in International Relations and South East Asian Studies
- Academics: Graduated with high distinction, senior year project selected for presentation to Dean of School of Social Work
- Activities: Summer volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, volunteer club advisor

ADDITIONAL

- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite
- Avid runner completing Chicago, Boston, and Ann Arbor half marathons
- Proficient in French and Spanish

EXAMPLE RESUME

FUNCTIONAL FORMAT

FUNCTIONAL FORMAT

City, STATE Zip | 999.999.9999 | emailaddress@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/functional-format

OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT | CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT | LEAN SIX SIGMA CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Analytical operations leader who thrives in complex supply chain manufacturing environment to consistently seek ways to improve profitability through Lean Six Sigma black belt expertise.

Core Competencies:

Complex Data Analytics, Strategic Planning, Project Management, Identifying Waste

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, & ABILITIES

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Completed Lean Six Sigma project management certificate (Black Belt), with expertise in project planning, advanced data analysis, problem solving, employee engagement, change management, and sustainable process improvement
- Led process improvement projects from definition through implementation, including Black Belt project which saved \$817,000 per year by reengineering sales and order entry processes and uncovering complex sub-optimization flaw

DATA & FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

- Designed and led data collection efforts, including value stream and process mapping, ERP systems, cross-functional facilitation, interviews, observation, and customized capture techniques
- Solved complex problems through advanced root cause analysis (hypothesis testing, graphical and regression analysis, pivot tables) and solution generation techniques (FMEA, structured innovation, designed experiments, trials) with view toward long-term strategy development (SWOT, Five Forces, Value Chain, advanced competitive analysis)

INTERNATIONAL

- Interviewed senior managers across Google's largest international markets, identifying 11 headquarter-subsidiary conflicts that hinder Developer Tools sales, and developed executive playbook with view to boost global sales by \$500M
- Developed and implemented eight "frontier market" recommendations, spanning strategy, sales, operations, IT, and HR, for American-funded solar energy startup in Zimbabwe

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCESS EFFICIENCY CONSULTING PROJECTS

Northern Products, 2015, *Reducing Past-Due Shipments by Improving Sales and Order Entry Processes* **Atlanta, GA**

Song Solar, 2014, *Increasing Frontier Market Sales with Locally-Adapted and Optimized Processes* **Harare, Zimbabwe**

Google, 2013, *Increasing Developer Tools Sales through Global Sales Organization Design* **China, Singapore, Taiwan**

GOLDMAN SACHS New York, NY

Operations Manager, 2010-2012

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Ross School of Business

Ann Arbor, MI

Master of Business Administration, June 2014

- Emphases: Finance and Accounting
- Leadership: Elected by cohort as Office of Career Development Student Representative
- Academics: GMAT 710 (92nd percentile); Economics Research Assistant, European MBA Exchange Program (Spain)

New York University, School of Public Policy

New York, NY

Bachelor of Arts, Politics and History, June 2009

ADDITIONAL

- Software proficiencies: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access), Minitab, Visio
- Fluent in Spanish, conversant in Italian
- Enjoys running and mountain trail hiking