Resume Writing for WPI Alumni

A resume's main purpose is to help you secure interviews from interested employers. Your resume should convey who you are and highlight your qualifications and skills. Whether you are a seasoned alum with 25 years of experience in your field, an alum with two years of experience, or a recent graduate, your job search begins with a solid resume. We suggest taking the time to have a Career Development Center (CDC) Staff Member critique your resume before you begin applying to jobs. You can email your resume to **cdc@wpi.edu** or you can schedule an appointment with a staff member using your Handshake account. If you do not have access, please call us at (508) 831-5260.

Preparation

Through preparation and organization, you can develop an effective resume. Start with a careful and accurate assessment of your career objective, educational background, work history, projects, skills, achievements, activities, interests, and other experiences. Analyze and describe these experiences in terms of "skills" and "results". What can you do? What experiences and skills do you want to highlight? Remember that employers view your resume as a direct reflection of you and your capabilities.

Before you begin writing or revising your resume, consider the following questions:

- Do you want to stay in the same line of work, but want to work for a different company?
- Do you like the company you work for, but want a new type of position/job? If this is the case, what kind of job are you seeking?
- Are you trying to re-enter the work force after being out for a while? If so, what kind of job are you seeking?
- Have you been laid off, or recently left a job? If so, do you want to get back into the same type of work, or start a new career path?

It is very important to consider these questions, because the structure, content, language and organization of your resume are all dependent upon the type of job you are seeking.

If you are not certain what field or type of position you want to pursue, schedule an appointment with a CDC staff member to discuss this and to learn ways to explore careers that match with your values, skills and interests.

Include Key/Buzz Words in your Resume:

If you are confident in the type of position you are looking for, find job postings of interest to you. Then look for key skills, job titles and buzz words that you see repeated across these job postings. Plug those key words into job searches to find more job postings of interest. The more specific key/buzz words you use, the more successful your job searches will be. Be sure you include these key/buzz words throughout your resume when drafting your job and/or project descriptions. You can include these words in your cover letter and interview answers as well.

Points to Remember

Readers will initially skim your resume in 15 seconds or less. If your resume gets pulled away at the 15th second, what key words should an employer remember, and how can you achieve this? A quality resume is accurate, descriptive, brief, easy-to-read, and aesthetically pleasing to the eye.

Resume Essentials

- Be specific and direct.
- Use effective spacing, margins, and headings.
- Be consistent and strategic in use of indentation, bullets, capitalization, bolding, header formats, content, and spacing.
- Avoid underlining and italics, which may be difficult to read in photocopies and can cause issues when uploading to an applicant tracking system.
- Use a format that best displays your unique and diverse background. You can tailor headings to highlight and expand on your strengths, e.g., "Software Development Experience" or "Project Management Experience."
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- Modify your resume to correspond to specific types of jobs. You might consider having a few different versions of your resume to highlight experiences in relation to different jobs or positions.
- Ask others to read your resume and tell you what they learned about you from it. Make sure it is consistent with the image you want to portray.
- The length of your resume is dependent upon your work history. If you are a recent graduate, you should keep your resume to one page in length, unless you have had significant internships, projects or experience related to your career goals. Alumni who graduated more than a few years ago can have a two page resume, more experienced alumni can use a longer resume. If you go onto a second page, make sure you use at least half of the additional page.
- Curriculum Vitaes are for those seeking jobs in academia may be four or five pages long.

Listing your experience using action verbs

1) Use **ACTION** statements**.** Start each of your activity descriptions with an ACTION VERB that efficiently conveys your key task, activity, or responsibility.
Example:
- **Provided** customer service to store patrons

2) Strengthen your descriptions with **QUALIFIERS / ADJECTIVES** that show **HOW** you performed your tasks well.
Example:
- Provided **friendly**, **professional** customer service to store patrons

3) Qualify **the PURPOSE, IMPACT, or VALUE** of your activity by connecting the activity to its beneficial goal for the organization or customers.
Examples:
- Provided friendly, professional customer service to store patrons **ensuring a positive experience**

4) Where relevant, **QUANTIFY the SCOPE, ACHIEVEMENTS, or OUTCOMES** of your activities with concrete numbers.
Example:
- Provided friendly, professional customer service to store patrons ensuring a positive experience**, and exceeding monthly sales goals by over 10% each month for six months.**

In summary, the best resume descriptors will have a combination of **ACTION VERBS**, supporting **ADJECTIVES**, as well as **NUMBERS** quantifying the **SCOPE**, **PURPOSE**, or **OUTCOMES** of your activities.

Action Verbs

Below is a list of sample action verbs to use when creating your resume. This is by no means an all-inclusive list but will provide you with some good sample action verbs to start with.

accommodated	Determined	guided	planned
acquainted	developed	handled	prepared
adapted	devised	headed	prescribed
advertised	diagnosed	illustrated	produced
advised	directed	improved	programmed
advocated	discovered	influenced	recommend
aided	displayed	informed	regulated
analyzed	drafted	innovated	removed
applied	edited	installed	resolved
appraised	educated	instructed	revised
arranged	eliminated	interpreted	scheduled
assigned	endorsed	investigated	serviced
assisted	enhanced	maintained	solved
chaired	established	managed	studied
conferred	estimated	mapped	suggested
consulted	evaluated	measured	supervised
controlled	examined	negotiated	taught
coordinated	exhibited	notified	tested
counseled	familiarized	operated	trained
created	founded	organized	transferred
designated	governed	originated	vetoed
designed	guaranteed	perfected	

Types of Resumes to use

The Chronological Resume

The chronological resume is the most common resume format and the one that we recommend WPI alumni use. It presents a clean and organized layout that highlights the most important and relevant information about you. Within each section, items are listed in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent and working backwards. Advantages of the chronological resume include:

- Professional interviewers are more familiar with with this format and answers their essential question, "What are your most recent and relevant experiences?"
- It is the quickest format to prepare since it is structured by titles, companies, and dates.
- It shows your employment timeline.
- It provides the interviewer with a guide for discussing work experience.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

The curriculum vitae is highly specialized and used mainly by people pursuing academic or research focused positions. It generally follows the chronological resume format. The CDC has a separate **Curriculum Vitae** tip sheet for guidance on creating this type of resume. Besides their purpose, the main differences between a CV and resume include Publications, Conferences and Presentations, which are included on a CV, but generally are not included on a resume.

Functional/Combination Resume Format

Another type of resume is the Functional Resume. This resume, although not as common, is a way to illustrate that experience you have is related to the job you are seeking, even though it may not appear to be relevant, or recent. Instead of organizing your resume chronologically into sections, you organize it by categories of skills. For example, if you are a Construction Foreman managing projects and now want to transition to a Product Manager role, you might consider drafting a Functional Resume. Instead of including a Relevant Experience section, your sections would become categories or themes of experience. Your sections might be labeled Budget Experience, Project Management, Supervision, etc. Then, take the descriptions from all your jobs, volunteer experience, etc. and align the action or activity to the category, but not the job. Your category sections of skills would be placed after your Professional Summary. Following that, you would have a work history section and list your job, company, location and dates using only one position per line. Appropriate situations to use a Functional Resume include changing career paths, have gaps in your work history, have frequently changed jobs, or are re-entering the work force after a period of time away. The Combination Resume is a hybrid of the Functional and the Chronological Resumes.

How to Get Your Resume Critiqued by the Career Development Center:

- Send an email to **cdc@wpi.edu**
- Make an appointment through your Handshake account an appointment with a staff member (if you do not have access to your account, please call our office at (508) 831-5260 .

Example of a Functional Based Resume

Anna Prentice

123 Rodeo Drive ▪ Boston, MA 01234 ▪ (555) 987-6543 ▪ ap@alum.wpi.edu

OBJECTIVE

Construction project management role utilizing innovation and strategy

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration, GPA 3.98/4.00, May 2015
University of Massachusetts – Amherst, Amherst MA
Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, High Distinction, May 2008
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Worcester, MA

CERTIFICATIONS

LEED AP BD+C (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Accredited Professional Building Design and Construction), March 2014
OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) 10 Hour and 30 Hour, April 2010/April 2013
Engineer-in-Training, MA, April 2008

SKILLS

Microsoft Office (Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Publisher), Timberline Project Management, ProCore Construction Management Software, Trainings in MEP (HVAC, plumbing, fire protection, and electrical) systems operation and construction

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Project Engineer, Construction Company, Boston, MA, July 2013-Present
Project Management

- Manage financials for $3.89M (7.6% of $51M project) contract change on 50+ Excel sheet for owner's Project Director of largest temples in world, a responsibility above typical scope of Project Engineer's duties
- Procure subcontractors from engagement for estimate, define scope, negotiate costs, and contract
- Acquire, verify, and submit technical data for approval to ensure compliance with design
- Validate approved materials would be correct, on site, and on time to maintain schedule
- Communicate progress and inquiries between team, architect, subcontractor, and owner
- Mentored and trained interns and new employees on process, procedure, and culture
- Compiled and analyzed documentation for LEED (environmental leadership) award recognition

Finance Experience

- Write contract changes up to $235,000 for subcontractor work that differed from original scope
- Develop and issue subcontractor contract, defining requirements and budgets for scope of work
- Define and create budgets and budget revisions for internal cost tracking and control
- Assemble invoices to owner through Excel, tracking charges to original and change contracts
- Evaluate and approve subcontractor invoices for agreement with work completed

Innovation Experience

- Serve as member on Innovation Committee, an atypical role for a Project Engineer
- Contribute and discuss ideas to improve process, technology, safety, and people of organization

Example of a Functional Based Resume (continued)

Anna Prentice (page 2 of 2)

Civil Engineer – Aviation Group, Civils R. Awesome Corporation, Boston, MA, January 2010-July 2013
Project Management and Consulting

- Represented company as the Owner's Project Manager for municipal client to advise project owner through construction process for $25M Airport Terminal and $8M Air Traffic Control Tower, including oversight of architect and construction manager
- Managed program budget in Excel, making daily adjustments to potential impacts and forecasting expenses
- Reviewed and adjusted contractor invoices before recommending payment to the owner

Innovation and Leadership

- Led the New England Region team across three offices in a division-wide, creative safety initiative competition New England team – among youngest in 65,000-person company to do so

Technical Acumen

- Designed in AutoCAD and MicroStation (design and drafting programs) and created estimates for runway, taxiway, and apron reconstruction projects including pavement, markings, and drainage

Staff Engineer, Bridges R. Us, Westborough, MA, June 2008-November 2009

- Assessed existing buildings to report on condition and estimate capital improvement and other renovation costs to create multi-year expenditure forecasts
- Inspected envelope restoration construction progress
- Mapped and assessed water/waste water systems for the National Parks Service

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Alpha Gamma Delta Women's Fraternity (Alumnae Club President), WPI, November 2006-Present
Skull Senior Honor Society, WPI, October 2007-Present
Scheduling Manager, Political Campaign, Worcester, MA, November 2007-Present
Fundraiser/Marathon Walker, Jimmy Fund, June 2009, June 2014-Present
Young Alumni Giving Committee, WPI, September 2014-Present
Beta Gamma Sigma (Business Honor Society), May 2015-Present

Standard Resume Example

Max Power
mp@wpi.edu; 555-234-567; www.linkedin.com/MaxPower
5 Main Street; Boston, MA 02108

OBJECTIVE:
Design Engineer in manufacturing

EDUCATION:
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Worcester, MA
Bachelor of Science, Aerospace Engineering with Distinction, GPA: 3.46/4.00, May 2014

RELEVANT COURSEWORK:
Compressible Fluid Dynamics, Advanced Gas Dynamics, Thermodynamics, Aerodynamics, Intermediate Fluid Mechanics, Rocket Propulsion, Intermediate Mechanics, Structural Dynamics

SKILLS:
Lab Techniques: Sensor calibration, data analysis and post-processing.
Lab Equipment: strain gauge, accelerometer, oscilloscopes, function generators, multi-meters, NI-DAQ, subsonic wind tunnels, water tunnels, and manometers, laser vibrometer.
Computer: ANSI M, C, Matlab, ANSYS, COMSOL, LabVIEW, Microsoft (Excel, Word, PowerPoint)

EXPERIENCE:
Technical Services Analyst, ABC Corporation, Boston, MA, October 2014-Present
Debugged and configured medical software to solve technical customer issues. Developed robust programming in C, code analysis, and problem solving skills. Identified creative solutions to a wide variety of often unfamiliar problems under time constraint imposed by medical field. Collaborated frequently with analysts from different software modules and different science and engineering backgrounds to identify solutions to integrated problem. Participated in additional internal work including software development projects and membership in an experts group.

PROJECTS:
Major Qualifying Project, WPI, August 2013-March 2014
Designed micro-pulsed plasma thruster in collaboration with a team of three as lead design and thermal analyst. Selected materials based on key properties including resistance, expansion coefficient and Young's modulus. Set design requirements based on expected life of thruster, propellant allowances, atmospheric resistance, and orbital requirements. Performed thermal analysis using COMSOL to create an accurate thermal model, including calculation of expected loads and creation of cyclic load function. Used as main model to analyze the thermal performance of thruster, including validation of model and behavior. Applied data from thermal analysis to draw conclusions on material choices and thruster design. Wrote full report detailing methodology and conclusions.

Space Craft Mission and Design, WPI, January-March 2014
Designed space craft for simulated scientific mission to Mars and Phobos in group of three. Served as leader to conduct subsystem design including analysis of propulsion, power, and attitude control subsystems. Facilitated trade-study analysis of different subsystem configurations to optimize overall design. Analyzed iterative process on analytical equations was conducted to ensure space craft met orbital, electrical power, and pointing requirements in Excel. Submitted written report and presentation on final design.

ACHIEVEMENTS:
Second Place, Team Division, AIAA Region I Student Paper Conference, Cornell University, April 2014

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:
American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, WPI, January 2013-Present

Curriculum Vitae (CV) Example

Angela Apple

777 Lucky Way
Worcester, MA 01609

508-777-7777
aapple@wpi.edu

OBJECTIVE
Postdoctoral fellowship focused in fluid mechanics

EDUCATION
Doctor of Philosophy Candidate, Mechanical Engineering, GPA 3.7/4.0 Expected May 2016
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), Worcester, MA
Dissertation: "Project Planning and Control in a Shipbuilding Yard"

Master of Science, Mechanical Engineering, GPA 3.9/4.0 May 2012
Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering, GPA 3.7/4.0 May 2009
Columbia University, New York, NY
Master's Thesis: "Plasma Synthesis of Crystalline Silicon Nanoparticles"

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
Research Assistant, Mechanical Engineering Department, WPI Aug 2012-Present
- Analyze filtration on fractal aggregates to best understand process
- Applied for and secured National Science Foundation (NSF) Research Grant to apply towards nanoparticle research
- Collaborate with ABC Company, DEF Corporation, and team of seven students to study fiber filters to advanced manufacturability
- Develop and maintain a web-based software to log, and analyze, product performance

Research Assistant, Engineering Department, Columbia University Aug 2011-May 2012
- Optimized plasma reactor to synthesize nanoparticles for electronic device applications
- Examined and categorized nanoparticles on electron and atomic force microscopes
- Maintained equipment such as vacuum, spectrometer, and laser light for experiments
- Performed experiments under varying plasma conditions independently
- Wrote weekly memos and monthly status reports highlighting progress and limitations

TEACHING EXPERIENCE
Teaching Assistant, Particle Engineering Course, Columbia University Jan 2011-May 2011
- Led office hours to help students understand and solve homework problems
- Created and evaluated student homework assignments
- Generated, graded and tracked weekly assessments, using Microsoft Word and Excel

PATENTS
Incorporated input roller having a rotary mass actuator (pending) Filed: Feb 2012
Handheld device having multiple localized force feedback (pending) Filed: April 2012
Tag for enabling contact with a wireless communication device (# 12345) April 2012

AWARDS & FUNDING
Massachusetts Society of Engineers Graduate Student Scholarship Aug 2008-Present
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, NSF April 2012

Curriculum Vitae (CV) Example (Continued)

Mechanical Engineering Advanced Study Grant, Columbia University Aug 2010-May 2011

PUBLICATIONS
Journal Publications
Angela Apple, Peter Pear, Olivia Orange. Journal article title. International Journal of Mechanical Engineering, 2013; Under review.
Angela Apple, Barbara Banana, Ginny Grape. Journal article title. International Journal of Mechanical Engineering, 2012; 126 (56-70): 1020-1056.
Angela Apple, Walter Watermelon, Marge Mango. Journal article title. International Journal of Mechanical Engineering, 2010; 122 (43-52): 894-906.

Conference Publications
Peter Pear, **Angela Apple,** Olivia Orange. Title. Conference, Conference City, State, May 2011
Ginny Grape, **Angela Apple**. Title. Conference, Conference City, State, Sept 2010

PRESENTATONS
Numerical Study of Natural Convection in Solar Thermal Storage Vessels
Massachusetts Society of Engineers Conference 2011, Concord, MA Sept 18-21, 2012
Numerical Study of Natural Convection in Solar Thermal Storage Vessels
American Society of Mechanical Engineers Conference 2011, Boston, MA June 4-7, 2012
Real-Time Automotive Slip Angle Estimation with Nonlinear Observer
American Control Conference 2011, Auburn, AL, Jan 12-15, 2013
Low Pressure Plasma Synthesis of Crystalline Silicon Nanoparticles
University of Minnesota Master Thesis Event 2007, Minnesota, MN, May 2, 2012

POSTERS
Low Pressure Plasma Synthesis of Crystalline Silicon Nanoparticles
Massachusetts Society of Engineers Conference 2012, Boston, MA, Sept 20-24, 2012

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS
International Association of Mechanical Engineers Aug 2011-Present
American Society of Mechanical Engineers Aug 2010-Present
Massachusetts Society of Professional Engineers Aug 2009-Present

SERVICE
Professional Reviewer, University Council of Graduate Student Grants Aug 2010-Dec 2010
Volunteer, Annual Blood Drive-American Red Cross, New York, NY May 2008, 2009, 2010
AmeriCorps Volunteer, MN Math Corps, New York, NY June 2009-July 2008