

# Résumé Guide

**A guide to creating a résumé recruiters read.**

Office of Career Services  
Middle Georgia State University  
[www.mga.edu/cs](http://www.mga.edu/cs)

# Preview

❖ This presentation covers:

- Understanding job postings.
- Developing a résumé employers will read.
- Skills and qualities employers look for.
- Personal and professional references.
- Cover letters.

# Don't waste your time...

- ❖ **Read the job posting carefully.**
  - Do you have the required and/or preferred skills?
- ❖ **Does the job sound like something you'd want to do?**
  - Is it legit or too good to be true?
  - Does it require upfront investments, fees, divulging information that could be used for identity theft?
- ❖ **How do you apply?**
  - Online? Fax? Mail? In person? Where? When?
- ❖ **Gather information.**
  - Transcripts, lists of jobs and job duties, relevant courses, skills.
- ❖ **Start putting together a résumé that shows how well you qualify for that specific job.**

# Combined Functional Format

- ❖ Usually best for students and new graduates with little relevant experience.
- ❖ Shows basic information recruiters need to see:
  - Contact information
  - Personal Summary
  - Education
  - Relevant upper-level courses
  - Skills – Technical skills, soft skills, certifications
  - Work experience, transferrable skills
  - Volunteer experience, community service
  - Leadership development

# Create a Word File

- ❖ **Open a document in MS Word and choose “No Spacing” style.**
- ❖ **Do not use a template or online résumé maker.**
  - Some force you to leave odd blank spaces on the page.
  - Some use complicated tables.
- ❖ **Use a 3/4” or 1” margin on all sides.**
- ❖ **Use a consistent standard typeface like Arial in 12 pt. font.**
- ❖ **Save your résumé to your thumb drive and email it to yourself for quick and easy access.**

# Your Contact Information

- ❖ **Positioned flush left or centered; be consistent with headings.**
  - Use a consistent style for cover letter, reference page
  - Your name should be larger than the other text and bold
- ❖ **Information about you:**
  - Name and email address
  - Address
  - Phone number with voice mail option or answering machine
  - Courteous, professional voice mail message
- ❖ **Email address.**
  - Must be professional
  - Should contain your name (susan.green@gmail.com)
- ❖ **Update this information regularly.**
- ❖ **Sample see example on the next slide.**

# Example Headings

## John R. Knight

100 Lakeview Drive, Apt. 204  
Macon, GA 31205  
478-123-4567  
john.smith@mga.edu

*If you need a little more vertical space on the page, put city, state and zip on the same line as street address.*

## John R. Knight

100 Lakeview Drive, Apt. 204  
Macon, GA 31205  
478-123-4567  
john.smith@mga.edu

*This style is safe because it is left aligned rather than centered or flush right, so it will very likely appear correctly on the receiver's computer.*

# Objective

- ❖ Must clearly state why you sent your résumé.
- ❖ Good for changing careers or for those little or no experience.

## *Four Easy Steps to a Powerful Objective*

Step 1-Opening	Step 2-Relevant Experience	Step 3-Job Type & Level	Step 4-Type of Organization
To contribute [or "transfer" if you're changing careers]	X years of progressive experience in the ____ field	to an entry-level ____ position	with an organization that values ____
To apply	a solid X-year education in X, along with ____	to a ____ position in ____	in a growing business than can benefit from ____
To build upon	the expertise and skills gained during X years in the ____ industry	in a responsible role as a ____	for an established firm that needs ____ (Purdue Univ OWL)

# Personal Summary

Short statements about yourself and your work outcomes.  
Quantify statements whenever you can.

## Ten best words

- Created
- Increased
- Reduced
- Improved
- Developed
- Researched
- Accomplished
- Won
- On-time
- Under-budget

## Ten overused words

- Outstanding
- Effective
- Strong
- Exceptional
- Good
- Excellent
- Driven
- Motivated
- Seasoned
- Energetic

# Personal Summary Examples

- ❖ Reduced client wait times by 30% by modifying layout of customer service area.
- ❖ Reduced waste of perishable items by modifying shipping and receiving procedures.
- ❖ Developed a project management system that brought in a \$3 million project on time and under budget.
- ❖ Researched and selected a software application to track outgoing shipments.
- ❖ Created a marketing plan for use of digital media using Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and updated web site.
- ❖ Implemented new training standards to increase productivity and retention of employees.

# Education

- ❖ **Name(s) of degree(s) stated correctly.**
  - A.S. – Associate of Science, Information Technology
  - B.A. – Bachelor of Arts, Communication
  - B.S. – Bachelor of Science, Applied Biology
- ❖ **Date degree conferred or anticipated.**
  - Show most recently conferred or anticipated degree first.
- ❖ **Name of college, city, state.**
  - Not U.S. Postal Service abbreviation GA, but Georgia.
  - List academic scholarships (not HOPE) and recognition.
- ❖ **Omit high school** unless your course of study or specialized program is related to the job for which you are applying.
- ❖ **Include cumulative GPA or Major GPA IF 3.0 or higher.**
  - GPA: 3.5/4.0 OR Major GPA: 3.5/4.0

# Example Education Section

## **EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Arts, Psychology**

Middle Georgia State University

Macon, Georgia

**Anticipated May 2015**

Major GPA: 3.7/4.0

*President's Scholarship recipient*

*Chosen Outstanding Student by business faculty*

**Associate of Science, Psychology**

Middle Georgia State College Macon, Georgia

**Conferred May 2012**

GPA: 3.8/4.0

# Relevant Courses

- ❖ **List upper-level classes, not core courses, successfully completed that are **directly related** to the job for which you are applying.**
  - Serves as an alternate to list of relevant skills and experience for those with little or no work experience.
  - List names of courses, not course numbers.
- ❖ **Consider including a brief description of major projects and/or research.**
  - *As part of an interdisciplinary team, assessed the feasibility of installing solar-powered lights to a section of The River Walk in Macon, Georgia.*
  - *Worked with chemistry faculty to develop a handbook with safety protocols, emergency procedures, supplies, etc.*

# Example of Relevant Courses

## RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Principles of Accounting I & II

Macroeconomics

Legal Environment of Business

Microeconomics

Intercultural Business

*Use tab key or columns, not space bar, to keep entries aligned.*

# Skills and Abilities

- ❖ **Skill:** A great ability or proficiency, expertness that comes from training, practice, etc. (*Webster's Dictionary*).
- ❖ Read the job description carefully, then show in your résumé that you have the required and/or preferred skills.
- ❖ Include **transferrable skills** obtained from previous jobs, classes, and/or professional training.
- ❖ **Computer skills:** Hardware, software, programming, etc.
- ❖ Use **bullet format** and develop statements to highlight ways you are a good fit for the job; show outcomes when appropriate.

# Skills Employers Seek

- ❖ Communication skills – oral, written, presentation, listening
- ❖ Analytical, critical-thinking, problem-solving skills
- ❖ Teamwork skills
- ❖ Technical skills
- ❖ Strong work ethic
- ❖ Adaptability
- ❖ Eagerness to learn

# Types of Skills

- ❖ **Job related – Related to a particular type of job or job field.**
  - Used Excel to develop and maintain order history database for 11,000 clients.
  - Used Publisher to design and produce high-quality advertising for a medium-sized insurance agency.
- ❖ **Transferable – Useful in a variety of jobs.**
  - Used event planning skills to provide educational and recreational activities for small groups of children ages 8 to 12.
  - Used oral and written communication skills to respond to customer inquiries.
  - Used critical thinking skills to plan schedules and work flow.
- ❖ **Self-management**
  - Manage time well by setting goals and assigning priorities
  - Strong work ethic
  - Adaptable
  - Eager to learn

Slide 9 shows the see best and worst words to use in the section.

# Other Types of Skills

## ❖ Communication

- Active listening and critical-thinking skills.
- Multicultural communication experience.
- Languages other than English.
- Writing and presentation skills

## ❖ Research and planning

- Identify problems, track trends.
- Set priorities and follow through.
- Proven project management skills.

## ❖ Data

- Analyze and interpret ...
- Audit, budget, monitor
- Improve, increase, decrease ...

Slide 9 shows best and worst words to use in the section.

# Other Types of Skills

## ❖ Human relations

- Active listener
- Motivated
- Effective negotiation skills
- Work well in groups or teams

## ❖ Organization

- Detail oriented
- Coordinate
- Manage projects

## ❖ Leadership

- Implement decisions
- Enforce codes and/or policies
- Follow established protocols
- Developed through practical work experience

Slide 9 shows the best and worst words to use in the section.

# Formatting Lists

## ❖ Typically a bulleted list.

- Clear, short, concise statements (like this one).
- Be specific; avoid generalities.
- Focus on what you have to offer to the position.
- Include strong nouns, adjectives, adverbs, action verbs.

## ❖ Use the bullet tool in Word or Insert Symbol command.

- Use sparingly to highlight only the most important things.

## ❖ Look at your résumé as .pdf file and email attachment.

- Be sure bullets and formatting appear as you intended.
- Some bullets print or are viewed as question marks.

# Example Bullet Statements

## ❖ For research assistant job

- *Assisted with research project by conducting interviews as part of a longitudinal study of health challenges of underprivileged students between the ages of 8 and 14 years old.*

## ❖ For government contracts job

- *Prepared bidding and proposal documents for design and build projects valued at more than \$1 million.*

## ❖ For accounting job

- *Create profit and loss reports for companies with more than \$6 million in assets.*
- *Manage accounts payable and accounts receivable for a firm with national and international clients.*
- *Monitor monetary exchange rates for clients.*

# More on Skills & Qualities

- ❖ Employers use GPA to gauge ability and look at work experience for evidence a candidate can do the job.
- ❖ For a new college graduate, experience is usually gained through an internship, summer job, part-time job.
- ❖ Tip: The most competitive graduates completed more than one internship in their chosen career field.
- ❖ Good communication skills or a strong work ethic are not likely to make up for a poor GPA or lack of experience.
- ❖ Employers look for well-rounded candidates, so the candidate who can offer evidence of that have a bit of an advantage.
  - Leadership roles in campus organizations or in community.
  - Volunteerism.

# Are You Qualified?

- ❖ **Conduct research to see the most valued skill sets needed to enter your chosen career field.**
  - [Bureau of Labor Statistics: Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)
- ❖ **Develop skill sets *before* you graduate.**
  - Elective classes
  - Community service, volunteering, internships
  - Student organizations on campus
  - Internships, shadowing, volunteer or civic activities
  - Informational interviews with professionals; mock interviews
- ❖ **Keep** business cards, info from workshops or special programs, names of speakers, etc.
- ❖ For interviews, **be prepared to give specific examples** of the skills listed on your résumé.

# Develop/Improve Soft Skills

## ❖ Find ways to develop the soft skills most desired by employers.

- Strong work ethic – on time, on task, honest, loyal
- Positive attitude
- Communication skills – written, oral, presentation, listening
- Time management skills
- Team player
- Self-confidence
- Ability to accept and learn from criticism
- Flexibility/adaptability
- Work well under pressure
- Appreciation of diversity – culture, age, race, disability

# Experience

- ❖ **Experience** - The knowledge gained by observing, demonstrating, or teaching a concept or idea to others.
- ❖ Possible titles for section:
  - Professional Experience
  - Related Experience
  - Volunteer Experience
  - Other Experience
- ❖ **Show current or most frequent positions or internships listed first.**
- ❖ **Start with position titles, company names, cities, states, and dates.**
  - Use action verbs to describe what you did; outcomes

# Example Experience Section

## EXPERIENCE

### Staff Writer

Mirror Publishing, Atlanta, Georgia Sep 2015 – Present

- *Edit and revise articles and ads for community events included in local and regional newspapers and magazines.*
- *Work with graphic artists to design covers and layouts.*
- Use action verbs here to describe what you do.

### Marketing Intern

Cherry Blossom Festival, Macon, Georgia Sep 2013 – May 2014

- Use action verbs here to describe what you did.
- Be careful with present tense and past tense verbs.

# Other Possible Sections

- ❖ Volunteer Experience
- ❖ Awards/Honors
- ❖ Notable Achievements
- ❖ Certifications
- ❖ Publications
- ❖ Required information mentioned in job ad

# Proofreading

- ❖ **Use the *Spell Check* and *Grammar Check* features of your word processor.**
  - Remember, Spell Check doesn't spot all words that sound alike but are spelled differently.
- ❖ **Read your résumé three times.**
  - Check for spelling and grammatical errors.
  - Check for awkward or unclear wording.
  - Be sure skills listed fit the job description; list first the required/preferred skills the employer seeks.
- ❖ **Ask two people to review it and give you honest feedback.**
- ❖ **Edit and make corrections, then save the file as a Word doc and as a pdf file.**

# Final Résumé Tips

- ❖ **Be honest and accurate.**
  - Remove jobs you do not want to use as references if omitting them doesn't leave an unexplained gap in your work history.
- ❖ **Target the résumé for each position for which you apply.**
- ❖ **Make your transferrable skills evident.**
  - Show you have and how you use required/preferred skills.
- ❖ **Try not to repeat information.**
- ❖ **Try to keep it to one page – short and concise.**
- ❖ **Print on high-quality white or cream résumé paper.**

# Cover Letter

- ❖ **Always send cover letter if the application requests it.**
- ❖ **A thoughtful, professional cover letter must target a specific job or organization.**
- ❖ **Shows your passion and fit for organization and job.**
  - Requires good research on the company beforehand.
- ❖ **See samples at on the Career Services webpage ([www.mga.edu/cs](http://www.mga.edu/cs)).**

# References

- ❖ **Use a separate page for references.**
- ❖ **Use the same header information/margins on résumé.**
  - Double space; add Personal and Professional References
- ❖ **Have least three professional references.**
  - Ask each one if they will be your reference.
  - Send each one a copy of your résumé.
  - References must know you well enough to speak about your accomplishments, character, work ethic.
  - Be sure their job titles and/or business affiliations make it obvious their opinions matter.
  - Avoid using family or clergy.

# Example Reference Page

## **John R. Knight**

100 Lakeview Drive, Apt. 204, Macon, GA 31206

478-123-4567

john.smith@mga.edu



Looks nice if it matches contact info/header from résumé and cover letter.

## **Personal and Professional References**

Name of reference

Position title

Company/organization

City State Zip

Phone

Email

# Summary

- ❖ You've seen information about:
  - Understanding the job postings you read.
  - Assessing whether you are qualified for a specific job.
  - Developing a résumé employers will read.
  - Skills and qualities employers/recruiters seek.
  - Personal and professional references.
  - Cover letters.

# Ask For help

- ❖ Computers available for student use in Career Services, Suite 254, Student Life Center, Macon Campus.
  - 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM, Monday through Thursday
  - 8:00 AM – Noon on Fridays
  - Summer hours: 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, closed Friday.
- ❖ When you finish developing your résumé, cover letter or reference list, have it reviewed in Career Services.
  - Email as a Word document to [careerservices@mga.edu](mailto:careerservices@mga.edu)
  - Call 478/471-2714 to make an appointment.

# Career Services

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Middle Georgia State University

Suite 254, Student Life Center (Macon Campus)

Suite 112, Sanford Hall (Cochran Campus)

<http://www.mga.edu/cs>

***Call 478-471-2714 to make an appointment.***

Ms. Heather McIntosh, Administrative Secretary

[heather.mcintosh@mga.edu](mailto:heather.mcintosh@mga.edu)

Dr. Melinda Robinson-Moffett, Director

[melinda.moffett@mga.edu](mailto:melinda.moffett@mga.edu)