

Resume & Cover Letter Guide



CAREER SERVICES
AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

A resume is a succinct outline of your education, experience, activities, accomplishments and skills as they pertain to your employment goals. Employers may spend only 30 seconds scanning a resume to determine whether your background matches their requirements. So, you need to think of your resume as a marketing tool that demonstrates that your product (you) meets the needs of your potential customer (the employer).

Effective resumes get noticed because they:

- Emphasize relevant accomplishments and potential contributions
- Focus on the skills necessary in a particular field or the requirements of a specific position
- Are concise, well-organized and easy to read

SIX STEPS TO AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

1

Self-Evaluation

If you have never written a resume, start with simple brainstorming to identify some of the skills and abilities you have to offer a potential employer.

- Think about your experiences (past and present) including education, coursework, jobs, internships, activities, honors, publications, language skills, study abroad experiences and community service projects.
- Create a rough outline that covers the past three to five years.

2

Industry Research

Next, research your field of interest using the resources and links available on our website to become more familiar with the skills and abilities employers are seeking in candidates.

- Review several job descriptions, on various job-posting sites, to help uncover specific needs and keywords in the industry. In general, all employers will be interested in communication and leadership skills.
- Keywords are nouns and phrases, industry buzzwords or acronyms used within a particular field. These are often found in the job description or the list of employer requirements. If your resume includes some industry keywords, it is more likely to be selected. However, only list terms you are familiar with and can answer questions about during an interview.
- Compare your qualifications to the requirements of employers and decide what to highlight on your resume.

3

Write Your First Draft

Follow the general guidelines on the next page and the tips here to create each section of your resume. There are also sample resumes included later in this section that offer a variety of formats and styles.

- Be concise! Express your qualifications and accomplishments using as few words as possible. For students and recent graduates with limited work experience, a one-page resume is recommended. If you have extensive experience, or are applying for graduate/professional school or academic fellowships, you may create a two-page resume or CV.

- Resume writing is different from other styles of writing. Do not use first-person pronouns (I, me, my) or articles (a, an, the).

- Do not include your age, gender, religion, political affiliation, ethnicity, marital status, social security number, references or salary expectations/history.

4

Create Multiple Versions (optional)

You may need to have multiple versions of your resume for different industries or types of positions you are interested in.

Using industry research as your guide, you can develop tailored resumes that emphasize relevant skills pertaining to any number of fields. You will also need to create a formatted and non-formatted version for various modes of distribution (see the information below).

5

Edit, Proofread and Critique

This is the most critical step of all and will involve enlisting the assistance of others.

- Make sure that you have organized your resume so that the most relevant information appears closer to the top of the page.
- Read each section over carefully and be sure that you have effectively conveyed the skills, abilities or accomplishments you are trying to emphasize.
- Proofread for spelling, capitalization or punctuation errors.
- Have your resume critiqued by a career adviser and, if possible, others within the field.

6

Save in Multiple Formats

You will need formatted and non-formatted versions of your resume for various modes of distribution.

- Convert your Word document into a PDF to retain the original formatting when sending as an attachment. Save as yourname.pdf.
- Use Notepad to convert your Word document to a text-only/non-formatted version suitable for copying and pasting into online applications and into the body of an email message (some companies do not accept attachments). Save as yourname.txt.

The point of the resume is to showcase your brand. Your brand is used to demonstrate who you are and what matters most to you.

By showcasing your accomplishments on a resume, you can help the prospective employer assess your ability to do the job. Use "Accomplishment Statements" to describe your achievements in the experience section. Quantify your work whenever possible. Avoid generic and vague statements.

EXAMPLE

Generic, vague statement:

Local Philanthropy Society

Event Coordinator

- Planned charity events

Strong, descriptive, quantified statement:

Local Philanthropy Society

Event Coordinator

- Coordinated three fundraising events for local shelters which raised over \$8,000 (20% over goal) and greatly improved community awareness



Try It Yourself!

Write an example of an accomplishment statement that showcases the above:

Action verb: _____

+

Project: _____

+

Result: _____

=

Accomplishment: _____

Action Verbs

Using action verbs will ensure that your experience and qualifications stand out.
Make sure to use a variety of strong verbs to showcase your skills.

Management & Leadership

administered
appointed
approved
assigned
attained
authorized
chaired
consolidated
contracted
controlled
coordinated
decided
delegated
directed
eliminated
emphasized
enforced
enhanced
executed
handled
headed
hired
hosted
increased
instituted
led
managed
merged
overhauled
oversaw
planned
prioritized
produced
recommended
streamlined
strengthened
supervised
terminated

Communication

addressed
advertised
arbitrated
articulated
authored
clarified
communicated
composed
condensed
conferred
consulted
contacted
conveyed
convinced
corresponded

debated
defined
described
discussed
drafted
edited
elicited
enlisted
expressed
influenced
informed
instructed
interacted
interviewed
involved
joined
judged
lectured
listened
mediated
moderated
motivated
negotiated
observed
outlined
participated
persuaded
presented
promoted
proposed
publicized
recruited
reinforced
reported
responded
solicited
specified
spoke
suggested
synthesized
translated
wrote

Research

analyzed
compared
conducted
critiqued
detected
determined
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
experimented
explored
extracted
formulated

gathered
identified
inspected
interpreted
investigated
located
measured
researched
searched
summarized
surveyed
tested

Technical

adapted
assembled
built
constructed
converted
debugged
engineered
fabricated
fortified
installed
maintained
operated
programmed
rectified
regulated
remodeled
repaired
replaced
solved
specialized
studied
upgraded
utilized

Financial/Data

adjusted
allocated
analyzed
appraised
assessed
audited
balanced
calculated
computed
conserved
corrected
estimated
forecasted
managed
marketed
projected
reconciled
retrieved

Helping

advised
advocated
aided
answered
assisted
cared for
coached
collaborated
contributed
cooperated
counseled
demonstrated
educated
enabled
encouraged
ensured
expedited
explained
facilitated
familiarize
furthered
guided
helped
individualized
insured
intervened
motivated
provided
referred
rehabilitated
simplified
supplied
supported
taught
trained
tutored
volunteered

Organization/ Detail

arranged
cataloged
categorized
charted
classified
coded
collected
compiled
distributed
filed
generated
implemented
incorporated
logged
monitored
obtained

ordered
organized
prepared
processed
purchased
recorded
registered
reserved
reviewed
routed
scheduled
submitted
standardized
systematized
updated
validated
verified

Creative

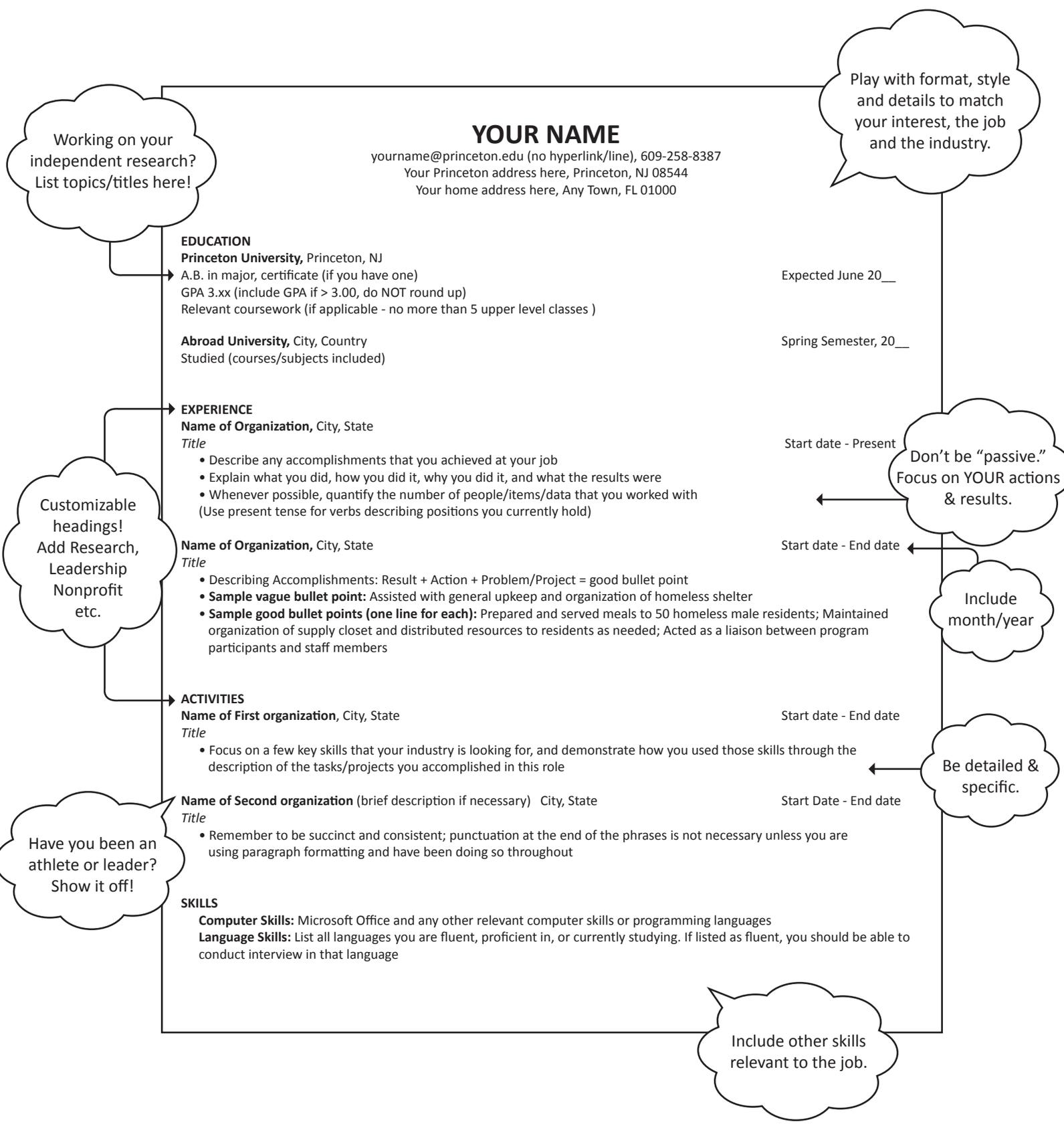
acted
began
combined
conceptualized
created
customized
designed
developed
displayed
drew
entertained
established
fashioned
founded
illustrated
initiated
integrated
introduced
invented
modeled
modified
originated
performed
photographed
revised
revitalized
shaped

Accomplishments

achieved
completed
expanded
exceeded
improved
pioneered
reduced
resolved
restored
transformed

Foundations of a Resume

Follow these tips to design a compelling resume



EXAMPLES

Same person, different focus. Order items based on what is most relevant to the position.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENT

Princeton Packet First Team	2010-2012
Benjamin Banneker High School, Varsity Lacrosse (2008-2012); Captain (2011-2012)	2008-2012
Captain	2012
Member, Maryland All-Star Team	2012
DC District IV First Team	2012
Washington News All-Area First Team	2011-2012
Fairfax County First Team	2008-2011
Southeast Conference All-Star First Team	2008-2011

EXPERIENCE

Vice President, **Princeton Engineers Without Borders**, Princeton, NJ | February 2014–Present
Local chapter of national humanitarian organization that implements sustainable engineering projects in developing countries

- Communicate with university administration and national Engineers Without Borders staff to ensure the financial backing and technical support necessary for project approval.
- Represent chapter in promotional events and organize regular chapter meetings on campus.
- Planned three-week service project in Summer 2011 to Huamanzaña, Peru, to install solar energy power.
- Designed and conducted accompanying instructional and educational program to teach Peruvian villagers about basic physics, the benefits of sustainable technology, and how to operate and maintain new technology.
- Fund-raised to meet goal of over \$15,000 and created 60-page collaborative report for Peru project.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

WORK EXPERIENCE

Vice President, **Princeton Engineers Without Borders**, Princeton, NJ | February 2014–Present
Local chapter of national humanitarian organization that implements sustainable engineering projects in developing countries

- Communicate with university administration and national Engineers Without Borders staff to ensure the financial backing and technical support necessary for project approval.
- Represent chapter in promotional events and organize regular chapter meetings on campus.
- Planned three-week service project in Summer 2011 to Huamanzaña, Peru, to install solar energy power.
- Designed and conducted accompanying instructional and educational program to teach Peruvian villagers about basic physics, the benefits of sustainable technology, and how to operate and maintain new technology.
- Fund-raised to meet goal of over \$15,000 and created 60-page collaborative report for Peru project.

[Redacted]

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Varsity Lacrosse

Benjamin Banneker High School, Captain	2011-2012
Member, Maryland All-Star Team	2012
DC District IV First Team	2012
Washington News All-Area First Team	2011-2012
Princeton Packet First Team	2010-2012

Samples of First College Resume

0001 Frist Center
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ 08544

Marie Curie

ada.lipton@princeton.edu
609-332-0001

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ June 2020
BSE Candidate, Intended Concentration: Computer Science
Coursework: General Computer Science, Algorithms and Data Structures, Introduction to Programming Systems, Information Security, Artificial Intelligence, Optimization

Davis High School for Science and Technology, Portland, OR June 2016
National AP Scholar, Vice President of Student Government

EXPERIENCE

McGraw Center, Princeton University, Princeton NJ September 2016-Present
Peer Tutor
• Tutor 25 undergraduate students on mathematics and physics, working 10 hours a week.

Davis High School for Science and Technology, Portland, OR September 2014-June 2016
Math Tutor
• Tutored high school freshmen ranging from arithmetic to calculus in one-on-one as well as in group settings.
• Taught more than over 100 high school students over two years.

Custom Solutions, Boston, MA Summer 2015
Business Analyst Intern
• Examined competitors to identify feature gaps in current products using Excel.
• Prepared presentations to suggest recommendations based on competitor research.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Princeton Women in Computer Science October 2016-Present
Member and Events Chair
• Partner with three other officers to plan educational programs and speaker events.
• Coordinate and facilitate weekly meetings.

Princeton University Orchestra August 2016-Present
Member
• Practice trumpet for ten hours a week and perform at three recitals each year.

SKILLS

Programming: Java, C, Python, PHP, HTML, CSS
Applications: Microsoft Office, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Flash

Cell: 212-555-1234
Email: batman@princeton.edu
School Address: 36 University Place
Princeton, NJ 08544
Permanent Address: 350 5th Avenue
Gotham City, NY 10118

Bruce Wayne

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ Expected June 2020
A.B. Candidate; Intended Concentration: Economics
Intended Certificate: Urban Studies
Coursework includes: Vigilantes of the Mid Century, History of Organized Crime, Justice and the Law

Princeton University Bridge Year Program, Shadow Institute, Bhutan Fall 2016
Fieldwork included: Keysi Fighting, Conquering Inner Fears

Gotham Preparatory School, Gotham City, NY June 2016
Preparatory President, Criminal Justice Organization, GPA 3.8

EXPERIENCE

Wayne Enterprises, Gotham City, NY Summer 2014, 2015
Intern
Assist in planning events that raise \$30,000 annually for local nonprofit orphaned children's foundation.
Managed event registration processes prior to and on day of events, including coordinating the efforts of 30 volunteers.

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

Police Explorers Program, Gotham City Police Department, Gotham City, NY September 2016-Present
Junior Volunteer
Participated in ride-alongs with Gotham City Police Department, shadowing investigations of arrested individuals.

League Of Shadows, Shadow Institute, Bhutan August 2013-June 2014
Club President
Practiced the ancient art of Keysi.
Taught peers important techniques of quieting the mind and pushing past fear.
Assisted in research with world renowned scholar, Ra's al Ghul.

ACTIVITIES

Autonomous Vehicle Engineering Club, Princeton University, *Member* August 2016- May 2017
Business Today Club, Princeton University, *Member* August 2016- May 2017

SKILLS

Highly proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, Access, and Power Point
Working knowledge of Adobe Dreamweaver, Photoshop, and Illustrator

General Sample Resumes

Olivia Pope

1000 State St. NW, Apt. 1
Washington, DC 20005

olivia.pope@princeton.edu

(123) 456-7890

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ | June 2016
A.B. in Politics; Intended Certificates in Spanish & Latin (GPA 3.75)
Relevant Coursework: Campaigns & Elections, American Politics, Microeconomics

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CAMPAIGN MANAGER 2015-2016
Princeton Undergraduate Student Government | Princeton, NJ

- Directed the winning campaign for Princeton's 2016 student body president, who received 73% of the votes.
- Managed all aspects of the campaign including recruiting a team, volunteers, creating a budget, and monitoring expenses.
- Raised \$11,000 in campaign funds, 86% more than the competition, by planning events, contacting donors, and taking donations.
- Assisted with speech writing and prepared the candidate for debates.
- Coordinated the voter outreach program, which included email, social media, and traditional mailers, which increased participation by 13% from the 2011 elections.

OFFICE OF POLITICAL STRATEGY & OUTREACH

Summer Research Intern | The White House, Washington, D.C. 2015

- Conducted foreign policies and domestic government research that advanced the goals of the office of the President.
- Drafted memos and summary reports to inform President of relevant findings.
- Compiled critical date and analysis for presentations.
- Curated news clippings from major media outlets to support research findings.

CRISIS & RISK PUBLIC RELATIONS INTERN

Sterling Public Relations | New York, NY 2014

- Monitored large projects for various client accounts.
- Prepared press kits for distribution, updated media lists, and compiled media coverage reports.
- Conducted benchmarking and research that included client competition, branding perception, and general industry trends.

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Member, Princeton Open Women's Crew Team September 2015-Present

- Commit 20+ hours weekly to practices and competition year-round
- 2nd place, 2V boat, Ivy League Champions, 2016; 6th place, 2V boat, NCAA Championships, 2016

Member Trenton High School Varsity Crew Team (2011-2015); Captain (2014-2015)

- Three-time state rowing champion, Varsity 8 boat, 2013-2015
- Served as captain for 2014-2015 season

Junior Women's Half Marathon Rowing World Record Holder in 15-16 and 17-18 age groups, 2014, 2015

SKILLS

- Crisis Management
- Publicity
- Political Analysis
- Campaign Relations
- Speechwriting
- Opinion Polling
- Fundraising

Carlton Banks

Campus Address:
Frist Campus Center Box 9999
Princeton, NJ 08544

310-111-9999
cbanks@princeton.edu

Permanent Address:
215 East Main Street, Apt 3
Bel Air, CA 90077

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ June 2016
A.B. in Art and Archaeology, Certificate in Dance GPA: 3.0

Coursework includes:
• Modern Repertory and Choreography, Topics in Dance History, Criticism and Aesthetics
• The Russian Avant-Garde, Behind the Scenes of the University Art Museum

Sorbonne University of Paris, Paris, France Summer 2012
Six-week summer study abroad in intermediate French

EXPERIENCE

The Daily Meal, New York, NY Jan. 2012-Present
Editorial Intern

- Gather research on topics ranging from nutrition to cooking tips and pitch story ideas in regard to the college student demographic to editors of online food blogs that draws more than 8 million visitors per month.
- Contribute to online stories for the Daily Finds page and write a daily blog for the Campus Eats section.
- Post daily responses to Campus Eats Q&A and comments page.
- Utilize social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest to help increase readership among university students for the Campus Eats section of blog.

Quirk Gallery, Brooklyn, NY July-Aug. 2011
Gallery Shop Intern

- Researched, wrote, and designed artist cards for represented artists.
- Streamlined Gallery Shop for Domino magazine photo shoot.
- Performed administrative and clerical tasks including answering phones and sorting mail.

Princeton University Bridge Year Program, Urubamba, Peru Sept. 2010-June 2011
Volunteer

- Selected for freshman year experience; worked in two rural communities building a ceramic water filter for residents as well as developing the frame work for an after school education program for children ages 5 to 10.
- Experience provided an autonomous cultural immersion of South America and Peruvian culture.

New York International Ballet Competition, New York, NY June 2009-July 2010
Summer Counselor (Live-in position with professional dancers, ages 17-24)

- Directed dancers' daily schedules for rehearsal and classes.
- Ensured fairness in competition by monitoring and timing rehearsals.
- Coordinated daily delivery of supplies of food and water.
- Communicated with judges and visiting company directors on behalf of the dancers.

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

Program in Dance Sept. 2011-Present
Selected Performer

- Performed solo in Susan Marshall's *Name by Name*.

HONORS

Princeton University: Outstanding Freshman Award in Dance, June 2012
High School: Member of the National Honor Society; AP Scholar with Distinction

Sample Fellowship/Graduate School Resume (Research Highlighted)

SHELDON COOPER

phone (609) 462-4942 | email drcooper@princeton.edu | address 314 Galileo Ct., Galveston, TX 02104

Education

Princeton University | Princeton, NJ May 2014
A.B. in Modern Physics and Cosmology (4.00 GPA)
 Certificate in Engineering Physics
 Honors: Astrophysics Honor Society

Research Assistant

January 2012-May 2014
 • Conducted analytical research of string theory and M-theory research studies.
 • Participated in groundbreaking research in the areas of dark matter, analytical mechanics, and supersymmetric theories.
 • Performed Princeton University's six-loop quantum gravity calculations.

Experience

ABC Company | Sometown, MA June 2013-August 2013
Research Intern
 • Developed and executed analytical test methods and controls for the manufacture of cell-based biological products.
 • Supported two additional research projects for senior scientists.

Research Highlights

- Performed extensive scientific research in the field of particle physics phenomenology at high-energy colliders such as the LHC.
- Served on research team that focused on theoretical plasma physics by studying turbulence and how it might be reduced to improve fusion reactor designs.
- Discovered why the Large Hadron Collider had yet to isolate the Higgs boson particle.
- Led laboratory bench studies for product advancements helping NASA create more innovative technology. Efforts contributed to leading-edge prototypes for the United States.
- Worked with Dr. Barry Kripke to write the grant proposal for a new fusion reactor.

Interests

Physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, cosmology, algebra, calculus, differential equations, vector calculus, computers, electronics, engineering, history, geography, linguistics, football.

Languages

Finnish, Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, Persian, Arabic, and Klingon

Sample Senior Thesis Resume

*There are many types of professional resume for artists, for example actors, writers, visual artists, dancers, directors, and producers. As you are starting out and looking for work outside of your artistic endeavors there are ways to translate your artistic work to traditional work. Below is an example of how a student might craft a resume that reflects their experience in a different way.

Simon Warhol

email: jd1992@gmail.com \ mobile: 917.555.5555 \ website: www.jackd.squarespace.com

EDUCATION

Princeton University Class of 2016
Concentration: English Certificates: Visual Arts and Urban Studies
Awards: Martin A. Dale '53 Award (Broadways) Summer 2014
 • Managed \$5k Dale Award grant to cover travel, housing, food, in-city transportation, and research materials for cross country tour of "Broadways" in big cities and small towns in development of a multimedia storytelling project integrating photographs, audio, and video

EXPERIENCE

Broadways, Producer June 2014 - Present
 • Produced interactive multimedia exhibit to be staged at the Lucas Gallery and available via app
 • Developed funding prospectus, secured and managed \$10k from campus partners to produce, hire student staff, and promote exhibition that drew >200 people and over 22k unique users in one week
 • Authored exhibit script and app materials, recorded and edited original material, and collaborated with a staff of 5 to develop exhibit and app
 • Wrote copy for social media advertisements, theatre festival programs, and event descriptions
 • Continuing development of app and exhibit to produce off campus

Visual Artist and Producer September 2013 - Present
 • Developed and exhibited over 14 shows including both independent work and collaborations
 • Curated and researched historical and cultural context, procuring materials and managing budgets ranging from \$200 to \$5k to exhibit work

Peer Academic Advisor May 2015 - Present
 • Build a support system both academically and socially for 25 first year students through collaboration with their Residential College Advisor.
 • Assist students in matriculation, course selection, and department navigation, along with personal support

Town County Arts Center, Intern June - August 2013
 • Marketed 10 unique productions via social media, papering, and personal distribution at local events
 • Created funding reports by analyzing box office data, compiling feedback, and projecting budgets for past and future theatrical and artistic exhibitions
 • Introduced Google Documents infrastructure to coordinate project tasks between offices to increase efficiency

SKILLS

Languages: Fluent French; Proficient Spanish
Technical: Microsoft Office, Adobe InDesign, Final Cut Pro, Final Draft, R, Social Media applications including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Hootsuite

Sample Pre-med Resume

Sample STEM Resume

Gregory House

111 Frist Campus Center
Princeton, NJ 08544

(609) 555-5678
house@princeton.edu

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ
A.B. in Molecular Biology, Pre-med, Certificate in Neuroscience, 4.0 GPA
Relevant coursework: Genetics, Biochemistry, Introduction to Biological Dynamics, Biostatistics, Microbiology, Genome Integrity and Human Disease.

RESEARCH AND LAB EXPERIENCE

“Revising the Phylogenetic Reassignment of Oxytricha trifallax” Fall 2014
A junior paper submitted that revised the phylogeny of O. trifallax using several conserved gene sequences.

Research Assistant, Frist Lab, Princeton University Spring 2014

- Conducted analytical experiment on gene expression, attempting to determine level of other factors.
- Performed purification of protein.
- Generated statistical summaries and reports of collected data.

Lab Technician, Molecular Biology Department, Princeton University Fall 2013

- Set up, adjusted, maintained and cleaned laboratory equipment daily.
- Analyzed and recorded test data to issue reports using charts, graphs and narratives.
- Examined cells stained with dye to locate abnormalities.

Research Intern, Princeton Pharmaceuticals, Princeton, NJ Summer 2013

- Performed DNA extraction and gel electrophoresis.
- Collaborated to design and develop antibody-based molecules.
- Conducted protein expression analysis to support research findings.
- Assisted with developing and implementing analytical methods using biosensors technologies and immunoassays.

HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE

Emergency Room Volunteer, Princeton Plainsboro University Hospital, Princeton, NJ Summer 2012

- Observed and assisted physicians and nurses as they examined and interviewed patients.
- Evaluated situations to identify patients requiring immediate attention and informed supervisor.
- Supported and comforted patients and their families.
- Performed clerical duties including filing and transferring phone calls.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Residential College Advisor, Mathey College, Princeton University September 2011-Present

- Advise 12 freshmen on academic and social issues to support their adjustment to college life.
- Plan and organize educational and social programs to develop a cohesive community on the floor.

Peer Career Advisor, Career Services, Princeton University September 2011-Present

- Conduct resume and internship workshops and individual resume reviews at the residential colleges.
- Develop career educational programs for students.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Staff Writer, Daily Princetonian February 2011-Present
- Cellist, Princeton University Orchestra September 2010-Present

SKILLS

- Laboratory: primary cell proliferation assays, cell/tissue culture, FACS, ELISA, lymphocyte isolation
- Computer: C, Java, Microsoft Office
- Language: Spanish

Campus Address:
36 University Place
Princeton, NJ 08544

Howard Wolowitz
hwolowitz@princeton.edu
609-763-9412

Permanent Address:
398 Laguna Avenue
Carlsbad, CA 92010

EDUCATION

Princeton University, Princeton, NJ June 2019
BSE, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Certificate in Engineering and Management Systems GPA 3.4
Coursework: Introduction to Engineering Dynamics, Thermodynamics, Modern Solid Mechanics, Engineering Design, Fluid Dynamics, Environmental Fluid Mechanics, General Computer Science, Programming Systems

SKILLS

Technology: Java, Python, MATLAB, Mathematica, SolidWorks
Languages: Majhi (Native fluency); German (Native fluency); Malwai (Conversational proficiency)

ACADEMIC PROJECT

Box Lift Crane Project – Engineering Design Course

- Designed and built a crane to hold and endure 500 lbs.
- Acted as a team leader for a group of six students and delegated work to each member.

EXPERIENCE

Engineering Intern, Liberal Design, Dallas, TX June 2016-August 2016

- Designed mechanical products and systems by developing and testing specifications and methods.
- Evaluated product ideas, models, and requirements and provided suggestions for improvement.
- Collaborated in a cross-functional project team of mechanical, electrical, and system engineers and developed an understanding of the life cycle of product design.

Research Assistant, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering Department, Princeton University Fall 2015

- Performed computational fluid dynamics to assist professor.
- Conducted design validation testing of prototypes.

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Team Leader, Engineers Without Borders September 2016-Present

- Lead the Peru team to develop clean water infrastructure in a Peruvian village.
- Research technologies and local resources and design infrastructure for water lines.
- Conduct fundraising to cover all necessary expenses.

Trip Leader, Princeton Outdoor Action Fall 2015-Spring 2016

- Led a group of eight freshmen on week-long wilderness trip, ensuring physical and emotional health of the students.
- Mentored participants to promote smooth transition to college life at Princeton and addressed their concerns.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Vice President, German Association of Princeton November 2015-Present
Member, Princeton Bhangra February 2016-Present

What kind of first impression do you want to leave?

Your letters and email messages to employers convey skills, interests, motivation, and knowledge about the organization or field.

As you begin to develop your Career and Life Vision, cover letters give you an opportunity to introduce yourself and direct your reader's attention to unique and specific areas of your background that align with the types of roles you would like to explore.

Keep these points in mind before you start:

- ▶ **What is your value proposition?** What is your brand? What unique skills do you offer?
- ▶ **Target your letter to match each particular organization or position.**
Make every effort to tailor each letter (or email) to show the connection between your qualifications and the employer's requirements.
- ▶ **Match your skills to those the employer is seeking and provide concrete examples.**
Read the job description and highlight skills that the employer is looking for with examples of how you have showcased those skills previously. Think of how your skills differentiate you from the rest of the applicant pool.
- ▶ **Address your letter.** Target an individual whenever possible. If a name is not available, use "Hiring Manager" or "Internship Coordinator."
- ▶ **Mention referrals.** If someone has referred you to the position or organization (e.g. an alumni contact, family friend or parent), mention this at the beginning.
- ▶ **Format.** Email attachments are the norm. It may also be uploaded as part of an online application, along with supporting materials. In rare cases, a printed version may need to be sent. Just like with your resume, it is smart to send the cover letter as a PDF to avoid formatting issues.

Getting started:

- ▶ **Begin your narrative.** Briefly share your major, degree anticipated and how you found the opportunity. You may choose to get creative to "hook" in the reader.
- ▶ **Express your interest.** Demonstrate enthusiasm for the position and organization.
- ▶ **Share your experience.** Use specific examples. Match your experience with the position requirements whenever possible.
- ▶ **Convince the employer.** Show that you possess the skills and abilities they are looking for and that they should offer you an interview.
- ▶ **Thank the reader for his or her time and consideration.**

Your street address
City, State, Zip

Date

Contact's Name
Contact's Title
Organization Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Tip:

If you are sending your cover letter in the body of an email, omit the information to the left and begin with the salutation.

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name [if you are unsure of gender, omit salutation and write full name; if the name is unknown use "Hiring Manager"]:

Opening paragraph:

- ▶ State the position you are pursuing and how you learned about it. If you were referred by an alumnus or other contact, mention this as well. If you are not aware of a specific position, state your area of interest.
- ▶ Briefly introduce yourself by stating your major and anticipated degree.
- ▶ Tell the employer briefly (one or two sentences) why you are interested in the position and their organization. Show a "match" between your background and the main requirements of the position. It is important to use examples.

Middle paragraph(s):

- ▶ Explain the relevant skills you have developed for the job through your coursework, activities, or work experience. Highlight those that would be most interesting to the organization and would enable you to contribute to the organization.
- ▶ Demonstrate that you have knowledge about a position, organization, and industry/field and that your interests, experiences, and skills are a fit.

NOTE: If you are writing a general letter of inquiry, explain why you are interested in learning more about that organization and career field.

Last paragraph:

- ▶ State that you have included (or attached) your resume and would welcome an interview to further discuss this opportunity.
- ▶ Finish by thanking the employer for their time and consideration and offer to provide any additional information.

Closing:

Sincerely,

Your signature
(leave 3-4 blank spaces for this; for email messages just type your name)
Your name in print

Tip:

This example is a traditional cover letter format. Feel free to get more creative to communicate your skills, strengths and qualifications.