



RESUME CRITIQUE SERVICE

The Vanderbilt Career Center offers resume critiques on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 2pm – 4pm. Resume critiques are 20-minute sessions in which you can meet one-on-one with a career coach to ask questions about your resume and obtain feedback for improvement. To schedule a resume critique, contact the Career Center at 615.322.2750.

To prepare for your resume critique and to make the most of your time with the career coach, please complete the following action steps prior to your appointment:

- Review the *Resumes* section under the *Job Search Skills* information on the Career Center website: http://www.vanderbilt.edu/career/students/viewAll_Sect.php?section=14.
- Review sample resumes on the career cluster page that corresponds to your career area of interest: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/career/students/getArticle.php?article=9>
- Make any necessary updates to your current resume.
- If you need to create a resume, utilize OptimalResume, the Career Center’s online resume-building service designed to assist you in drafting a high-impact resume: <https://vanderbilt.optimalresume.com>
- Compare your resume to the checklist below to ensure that it meets the criteria for a winning resume.
- Print a copy of your resume and bring it with you to the resume critique. Note: Career Center staff will not critique a resume on a computer; you must provide a paper copy.

RESUME CRITIQUE CHECK LIST

Contact Information

- Name.** Use a font size larger than the largest font in the resume so your name stands out (16-18 pt. font). The rest of your contact information can be in the smaller font size (10-12pt).
- Mailing Address:** Include your permanent mailing address and school address.
- Phone number.** Be sure your voice mail message sounds professional.
- E-mail address.** Avoid using “cute” or inappropriate e-mail usernames.
- Include the URL of your website if you have one and **only** if the content is appropriate for employer viewing.
- Remove any automatic hyperlinks on your e-mail address and URL.

Objective- (Optional if accompanied by a Cover Communication)

- Keep your objective **short and concise** by simply stating the industry and/or job title and the company name (for example, “To obtain a summer intern with Goldman Sachs”).
- Eliminate personal pronouns** such as “I” and “my” from your objective.

Education

- List degrees in reverse chronological order (most recent listed first).
- Spell out** names of degrees (i.e. “Bachelor of Science”, not “BS”).
- Emphasize your university by placing it **before** your degree and in bold.
- Include the **city and state** after the institution name (there is no need to include the zip code).
- List the **month and year** of your graduation. Do **not** write “expected” or “projected” graduation (i.e., if you are graduating in May 2010, write “May 2010”).
- Include GPA if it is a 3.0 or above, and use “GPA” (not “G.P.A.”). Round the number off (i.e., 3.25, not 3.249).
- If you have completed a study abroad experience, include it in the education section.
- If you financed your education, say so. For example, “Maintained a 3.5 GPA while working part-time to pay 75% of tuition.”

Experience

- List your experience, starting with the most recent position (**reverse chronological order**).
- Include full-time and part-time jobs, paid or unpaid internships or practica, and volunteer work, especially if it is related to your desired job.
- Use bold print and/or italics to highlight your *job title* and **company/organization name**.
- Include city and state **only** for employer location, **not** the complete address.
- When listing dates, you can include the **month and year, semester and year, or just the year** of employment, but be consistent throughout with the format you choose. You do **not** need to include exact dates.
- Do **not** include unnecessary information, such as supervisor’s name, salary, etc.

- List job descriptions/duties with **bullets** instead of writing them in paragraph form.
- Use **strong action words** to describe what you did in your past jobs (**avoid** passive phrases such as “responsible for” and “duties included”). **Eliminate** personal pronouns (I, me, we) and articles (a, an, the) from your descriptions.
- Use appropriate **verb tense**. Use present tense action words to describe present employment experience and past tense action words to describe past employment experience.
- Include numbers to **quantify** experience where possible. For example, # of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, # of workshops taught or projects coordinated, \$ amount saved by your ingenuity.
- Focus on what you **accomplished**/your **results** and how you were **valuable** to past employers, **not** on your responsibilities. For example, **instead of** “Responsibilities included implementation of policies and procedures, training of new employees, interfacing with subordinates and vendors,” **try** “Worked with staff and vendors to increase product turnover by 15% and sales by 23%. Trained 14 new employees, five of whom were rapidly promoted.”

Skills

- Include **computer** skills and name the software programs in which you are proficient.
- Include language skills if applicable. (Non-native English speakers should **not** include English since this is assumed.)

Additional Categories

You can include some of the following categories as applicable experience in addition to those categories listed above:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honors/Awards | <input type="checkbox"/> Course Projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular Activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Work/Community Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Publications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certifications/Licenses | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentations |

General Resume Guidelines

- A resume is a marketing tool, **not** a complete job history. Include **only** the items that will help you get the job you want. Leave off anything that won't. Try to **target** your resume to a specific position or industry.
- Your resume should be **one to two full pages** in length, but preferably only one full page.
- Your document should look **balanced**, be pleasing to the eye, and be **easy to read**.
- Your resume format (bolding, italics, etc.) **must be consistent** throughout your document.
- The body text should not be too small (**no less than 10 pt.**) or too large (**no more than 12 pt.**).
- Use consistent and **proper punctuation**.
- Do **not** include a list of professional references. Your reference list should be a **separate** document in the same format as your resume.
- It is unnecessary to include a statement at the bottom of your resume that refers to the availability of your references. However, you may want to include a statement at the bottom of your resume that lets the reader know that you have a professional portfolio for review/to share.
- Run a **spell check AND proofread** carefully. Have at least two additional people proofread your resume.

NEXT STEPS

To fully utilize the Career Center’s services please complete the Individualized Coaching Action Plan (ICAP) and participate in a coaching assessment: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/career/students/icap.php>. This process will help you connect to other VCC resources beneficial to your career and life mapping process.

Resume Critique – Appointment Date/Time: _____

Vanderbilt Career Center Student Accountability Policy

The VCC provides programs and services to support students with their individual professional pursuits. As a member of the campus community, we ask that students agree to be accountable for their actions as stated in the Vanderbilt University Community Creed. Being accountable is demonstrated when students communicate with the VCC when they are unable to fulfill their commitment to an appointment or event to which they have registered or been scheduled. The following outlines VCC expectations of students’ behavior that will support the community value of accountability:

*The VCC requests that students arrive on time for scheduled appointments. Students who are unable to keep appointments **should cancel at least 24 hours in advance** by calling the Career Center at 615.322.2750.*

Students arriving more than 10 minutes late for appointments without contacting the Career Center in advance will lose their appointments and will need to reschedule.

*Missed appointments or appointments that are cancelled with less than 24 hours notice may be **rescheduled no sooner than two weeks** after the original appointment date.*