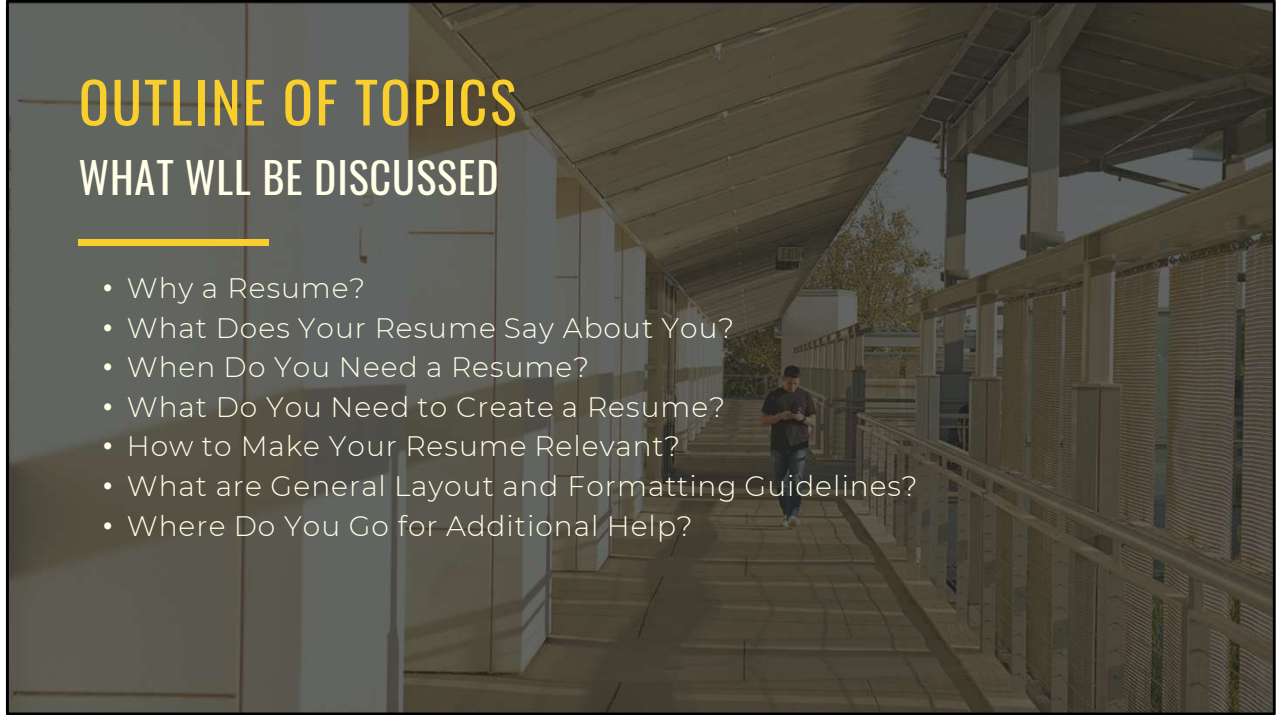




Hi my name is Joan Kang and I am a Senior Career Services Advisor at Santa Monica College in the Career Services Center and this presentation is focused on resume writing for those wanting to go into the legal profession. The information presented can be used when applying to jobs, internships, scholarship programs, academic programs, and volunteer opportunities.



For our presentation today, here's what I will be discussing:

- Why a Resume?
- What Does Your Resume Say About You?
- When Do You Need a Resume?
- What Do You Need to Create a Resume?
- How to Make Your Resume Relevant?
- What are General Layout and Formatting Guidelines?
- Where Do You Go for Additional Help?



## WHY A RESUME?

- Marketing tool
- To obtain an interview
- Requirement of many organizations

So why do people need a resume? A resume is a marketing tool and not your professional biography. It is used to sell yourself to a potential employer or program so that you can obtain an interview. An effective resume will show how your qualifications match what an employer/program is looking for in an ideal candidate. Therefore, it is important that your resume be targeted to what you are applying to. That means each resume you send out should also be different. And later in this presentation, I'll teach you how to target your resume.



But first, do you know what is the average amount of time an employer/recruiter takes to review an applicant's resume?

Employers only spend about six seconds reading a resume. If you are lucky, even longer.

The good news is that there is no one "right" way or "magic" way to write a resume. However, there are some best practices and standards. Your job with your resume is to grab the viewer's attention very quickly.

## WHAT DOES YOUR RESUME SAY?

### RESUME

- Neat
- Well-organized
- Error-free
- Professional Appearance

### YOU

- Neat
- Well-organized
- Attention to detail
- Careful and Competent



And, although there is no right way to write a resume, a resume can say a lot about an applicant. Did you know that a resume can provide hidden messages to employers? A resume can tell a lot more than the list of jobs you have had in the past. It can tell an employer what kind of applicant you really are, and on this slide, these are just a handful of examples of hidden messages your resume may or may not already contain.

For example, a neat, well-organized and error free resume that is targeted directly to the job/program posting and has been proofread carefully to catch any mistakes, shows that you are attentive to detail, understand grammar and spelling and competent for the job. Well-formatted resumes that flow naturally and share information that is relevant to the job description/program speaks volumes about your ability to think and organize tasks. When an employer is looking for the ideal candidate, these details matter.



And one of the ways you can prepare for the recruitment process, is to make sure your resume is up-to-date. And when I spoke earlier about targeting your resume to fit each job description or program, I didn't mean you need to create a brand-new resume each time you apply. Instead, it is about adjusting and choosing which parts of your work experiences are highlighted and which can take a backseat this time around.

To do this, I recommend that students create a "master" resume. This master resume houses every bit of your experience, skill set, accomplishments, all written out in a professional resume format. Then, when you are ready to start applying for jobs, internships, research or volunteer opportunities, use the job or program description to determine what parts of your master resume need to change – what details need to be highlighted, removed, added, and what language needs to be tweaked.

# CREATING A RESUME

## WHAT DO YOU NEED?

1

**JOB  
DESCRIPTION**

2

**EDUCATIONAL  
BACKGROUND**

3

**WORK  
EXPERIENCE**

Importance of Relevance

+

General Guidelines

So, what do you need to create a resume?

First, you need to have a copy of what you are applying to. In your case, you might be applying for a job, internship, or volunteer opportunity. Typically, when applying for any of these opportunities, the employer or organization will provide you with some guidelines in the form of a job description. Sometimes with internships and volunteer opportunities, who they want to bring on board might appear within the program description and eligibility requirements.

You also need to make sure your resume contains relevant educational information and work experience, as it relates to what is being asked by the employer or academic program. In the next couple of slides, I will share with you how you can make your resume relevant as well as provide you with general resume guidelines.



So, how do you make your resume relevant?

First, you need to know the job description. Read the job description thoroughly. Look at what the employer or academic program is asking for. Many of opportunities focused on law are interested in your critical reading abilities. Are you able to read, understand, and critically analyze complex materials? In law school, you will be provided with an extensive exposure to writing, specifically the techniques and forms common to law. However, what programs and employers might be looking for in a pre-law student is someone with fundamental writing skills. You will want to seek out opportunities that require rigorous and analytical writing. What about your oral communication and listening skills? What experience do you have with public speaking? Other areas might be, what is your experience and knowledge working with people of diverse backgrounds? Do you need research experience? Do you need a certain level of education? Are they only interested in junior and senior standing



college students? How are your organizational and management skills?

Second, you want to customize the headings based on what is stated on the description. Is there an emphasis on your familiarity with the legal profession, academic accomplishments, your leadership skills, and a commitment to public service? If so, you will want to include sections titled Relevant Legal Experience, Academic Accomplishments, Leadership Skills, and Public Service Experience.

Third, you want to connect your experience. If you have the skills being asked, either through your education or work experience, list them on your resume. However, you only want to list things that are relevant, what is being asked for by the employer or academic program. If you are not sure how to connect your experience to what is being asked, connect with the Career Services Center and we can help you. You also have access to academic counselors who can point you in the direction of what courses SMC offers that relate to the skills being asked.

Finally, beware that some programs and employers, utilize an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to screen and weed out resumes that don't closely match the job description. That is why it is important to target your resume to what you are applying to.

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## HEADER

### MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

- 
- Name (first and last name)
  - Address or the alternative
  - Professional e-mail address
  - Phone number with professional voicemail

Now that you have an overall idea of what you need for a resume, let's break it down even further.

Let's start off with the header. Your resume header is the section that tops your resume. It is the first thing an employer or recruiter will check on your resume.

Resume headers carry all your personal contact information. Therefore, it needs to include your first and last name and contact information an employer can use to contact you. When posting your resume on the internet, consider whether you want your resume to be public and how much of your contact information you want visible. Resume headers serve as a business card of sort. Having a poor resume header format can even cause ATS software to reject your resume. I recommend that you use the same header for your resume, cover letter, list of references, etc.

With your resume header, first start off with your name. It is essential that your header include your name. It sounds obvious, but don't forget it. The font type size should stand out, be easy to read, but not look out of place. Make sure your name matches your resume, cover letter, online application materials, background check applications, etc.

Typically, you would list your address next. This is standard on resumes. However, as the landscape of communication changes, your complete address is sensitive information that you should list on your resume if you feel comfortable. An alternative to listing your entire physical address might be to just list the city and state where you reside.

Next item to include is your email address. Chances are, this is how an employer/program will reach you. Make sure to list a professional email that you check often.

Your phone number is the next most popular means of communication for employers. List a phone number with a voicemail set up to receive messages. Make sure to use a professional outgoing message on your phone as well as be prepared to handle a professional conversation when you answer your phone.

Some of you might be thinking, should I include a link to my personal website, my social media handles or LinkedIn information. You should only include this information if your accounts are current and up-to-date, relevant to the job and will enhance your chance of obtaining an interview.

## EXAMPLE of HEADER

**Joe Corsair**

1234 Pico Avenue Apt. 567  
Los Angeles, California 90025

[corsair\\_joe@student.smc.edu](mailto:corsair_joe@student.smc.edu)  
310.434.4300

Here is an example of a Header

## EDUCATION

### MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

- Name of the school
- Name of your degree and major
- Date or Expected Date of Graduation
- Optional Information
  - GPA (Generally a 3.5 or higher)
  - Study Abroad
  - Relevant Coursework
  - Academic Awards and Scholarships

Typically, after the header, most current students and recent graduates should list their education next. Your education is the most recent and relevant experience. Employers and academic programs want to see that you have earned your degree or potentially will be earning one. They can see by the name of your degree/certificate, major and/or relevant coursework what areas you have a foundation of knowledge.

On your resume, include the name of the school. Do not abbreviate the name of the school. List the city and state where the institution is located and period of attendance or better yet, expected degree/certificate date information. In most cases, schools should be listed in reverse chronological order (most recent degree/certificate listed first). For exceptions, see the Career Services Center.

Also, make sure to check with an academic counselor at one of the several academic counseling programs to see if you qualify to receive a

degree/certificate based on the coursework you have completed or will be completing before you leave SMC. Make sure the dates are right aligned and the degree/certificate is exactly what was issued or will be issued by SMC Admissions and Records, the office where you will submit your Petition to Graduate form. Employers do verify information listed on your resume.

If space permits and it is relevant, other areas you could include that are optional are GPA, study abroad, relevant coursework or academic awards, Dean's List, honor societies, and merit-based scholarships. Do not include any high school information.

## EXAMPLE of EDUCATION

### EDUCATION

**Associate Degree for Transfer, Political Science**

To be Conferred Spring 2022

**Associate Degree for Transfer, History**

To be Conferred Spring 2022

Santa Monica College, Santa Monica, California

- 3.6 GPA
- Relevant Coursework: Public Speaking, Argumentation, Introduction to Law, Critical Analysis and Intermediate Composition, Statistics, International Relations, Comparative Politics
- Awards: 2021 Dale Ride Internship/Scholarship, 2020 Outstanding Service Award for Tutoring
- Campus Involvement: Alpha Gamma Sigma Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Law Pathway Program, Pre-Law Society

Here is an example of the Education Section

## EXPERIENCE

### WHAT COUNTS?

- Part-time/Full Jobs + Internships
- Courses + Projects + Lab Skills
- Research + Publications + Presentations
- Service-Learning + Volunteering
- Student Club Leadership + Athletic Teams

The next part of your resume I want to focus on is your experience. This area should take up the bulk of your resume. This is the area that employers and academic programs focus the most time reviewing, so make sure you list experiences that are relevant to the job or program description. There are many forms of experience including paid and unpaid opportunities such as jobs and internships you have held, even self-employment experiences, class projects you have completed, skills you have learned in your labs, research, publications, presentations, service-learning, volunteering, and your leadership in student clubs and collegiate teams.



## EXAMPLES of EXPERIENCE

### LEGAL EXPERIENCE

#### Legal Assistant/Intern

December 2019 – March 2020

Law Office of Jane Myers, Beverly Hills, California

- Greeted and interacted with clients in person, by telephone as well as email, building strong customer relations
- Scheduled and set up conference calls, interviews, and meetings with clients
- Provided administrative legal support
- Researched applicable laws and codes, analyzed facts, and assisted with the preparation of summary reports
- Assisted with compiling case files and legal documents
- Prepared clients for attorney client meetings
- Maintained files, databases, records, and other office documents

#### Student

February 2020 – Present

Santa Monica College Introduction to Law Course, Santa Monica, CA

- Compare and contrasts the concepts of civil rights and civil liberties
- Research the connection between court cases and the Bill of Rights and prepare legal briefs
- Analyze concepts of civil rights and civil liberties
- Review current conflicts and cases under consideration by the Supreme Court and explain the significance
- Develop and present strategies for effective case research

Here are examples of what can be listed under your experience section.

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## EXPERIENCE

### SECTION HEADINGS

- 
- Legal Experience
  - Community Involvement
  - Leadership and Volunteer Experience
  - Relevant Coursework
  - Research Experience
  - Related Experience

Your experience can be listed or grouped together in a variety of ways. For example, you can breakdown your experiences into smaller specific sections, based on similarities. If you are limited in space, be sure to focus on direct experiences that relate to the position you want. Typically, for pre-law students looking for entry level administrative positions or internships in the legal field, this can include highlighting any legal experience, community involvement, leadership and volunteer experience, relevant coursework, research experience, publications, and presentations that you have.

Again, make sure to choose experiences that are relevant and tailored to the position you want. Do not list all your experiences on your resume.

## EXAMPLE of TITLING YOUR EXPERIENCE SECTION

### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

#### **Vice President and Inter-Club Council Delegate**

January 2020 – Present

Santa Monica College UNICEF, Santa Monica, CA

- Plan and implement on average 1 education, 1 advocacy and 1 fundraising event each semester
- Develop a strong recruitment and retention strategic plan
- Supervise 10 volunteer events with an average of 50 people in attendance per event
- Responsible for creating the new constitution and board member responsibilities to ensure compliance with regulations
- Responsible for setting up appropriate committees to coordinate and expand education outreach related to the child survival movement
- Coordinate partnership development on and off-campus

Here is one example of how to title your experience section.

## EXAMPLE of TITLING YOUR EXPERIENCE SECTION

### ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

#### Student Office Assistant

October 2019 - Present

Santa Monica College Student Life Office, Santa Monica, CA

- Provide front desk coverage including responding to any phone calls and in-person inquiries
- Evaluate problems and respond to questions regarding departmental services, documents or notices and refer to appropriate individuals and/or departments
- Maintain a professional and welcoming atmosphere for faculty, staff, students and visitors
- Operate office equipment such as computers, printers, copy machines, along with a variety of office software including Word, Excel and Outlook
- Respond to confidential information in compliance with FERPA confidentiality regulations
- Promote events on campus and update and distribute student targeted marketing materials
- Assist with the disbursement of food security program vouchers and student food pantry access

Here is another example of how to title your experience section.

## EXPERIENCE

### MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

- List only relevant experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Include job titles, start and end dates, company names, city and state of company
- State accomplishment and achievements
- Use bullet points
- Use action verbs

Now, that you have an idea of what types of experiences to share in this section and how to categorize them, let's talk about how to list this information. You want to list the name of the companies, organizations, programs you worked for or class projects you are currently working on or have completed. Include their location and dates of employment or participation, meaning start and end dates, using month and year. Under each experience, include brief descriptions of the accomplishments and achievements you made in that role. Your experience is typically presented using bullet points and in reverse chronological order, beginning with your current experience and working back in time. You also want to use simple and professional looking bullets points which will make reading your resume easier for employers. Always start off each bullet point with an action verb. Make sure to use present tense if the experience is current and past tense if the experience is no longer being done.

## EXAMPLE of EXPERIENCE SECTION

### **Hostess**

February 2020 – March 2020

California Pizza Kitchen, Manhattan Beach, California

- Communicated with 10 serving staff to ensure efficient seating times
- Developed and maintained positive working relationships with customers and coworkers to reach daily business goals
- Responded to customer reservations, accommodation requests and general questions in person and over the phone, according to company policies and regulations
- Supervised and coordinated changing table and server rotations
- Greeted and welcomed approximately 50 customers daily
- Monitored dining facility to provide an excellent customer service experience

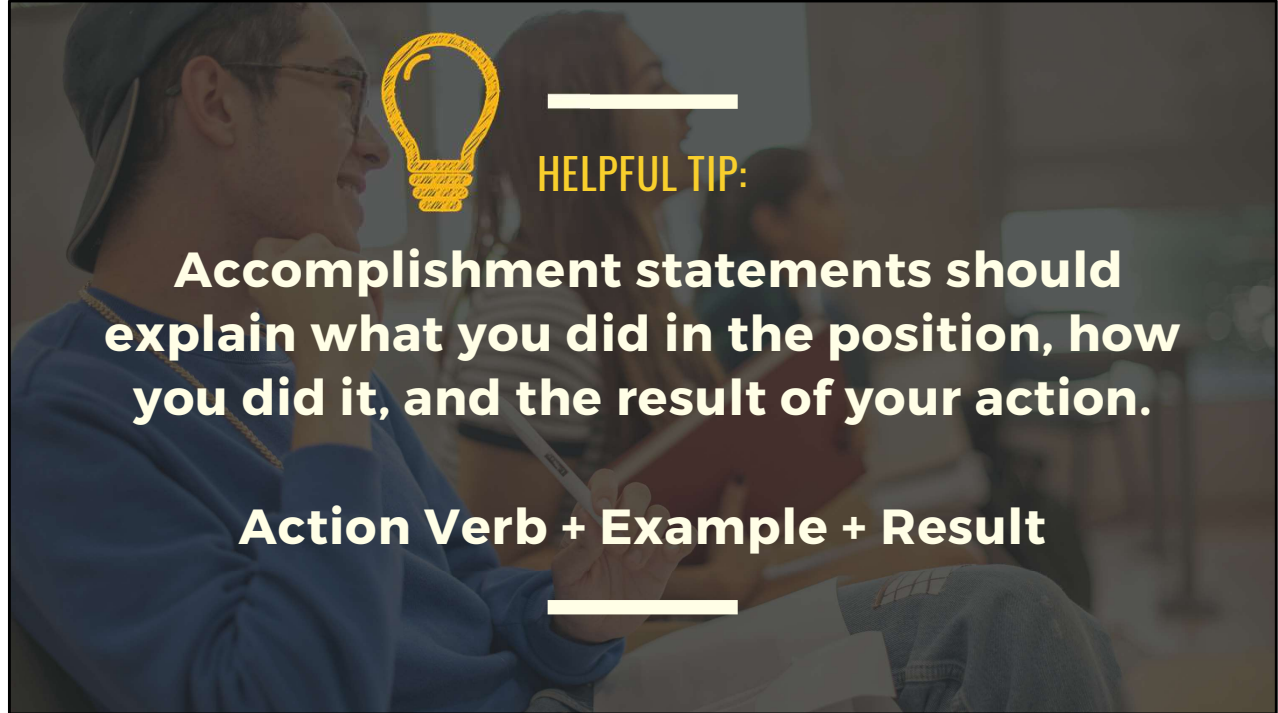
### **Student**

August 2019 – December 2019

Santa Monica College Business Law and the Legal Environment Course, Santa Monica, California

- Analyzed cases to understand why a legal principle was applied and how it contributed to the court's decision
- Evaluated 3<sup>rd</sup> party evidence to determine contract claim validity
- Researched legal issues relevant to business law and determined whether a source had credible legal information
- Demonstrated how cases progressed through the court system from filing, trial and appeal

Here is an example of an experience section.



When you are listing your accomplishments and achievements, you should explain what you did in that role, how you did it, and the result of your actions.

First begin with an action verb to show you did something. Then include an example or context for that action. Make sure to be clear and specific. Finally demonstrate the result of your actions to show the value of your work, the purpose and/or the impact.

Again, make sure to tailor your skills and experiences to the position you are applying to. Be concise while providing enough details. Don't just list tasks. Employers like to see results, numbers, percentages versus generalities. Include how you solved problems and achieved goals as well as other concrete and specific language.

## EXAMPLES of ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENTS

- Prepared and drafted 10 restraining orders based on interviews with witnesses, victims and law enforcement
- Assisted with fact development for litigation by interviewing potential named plaintiffs
- Researched insurance law to develop strategy for settlement negotiations for client's ADA and medical claim
- Prepared 6 to 10-page self-help guides for consumers in plain language that explained immigration rights.

Here are examples of accomplishment statements.



## SAMPLE ACTION VERBS

Action Verbs for Pre-Law/Law Pathway Program Resumes						
accelerated	clarified	designed	forecasted	listened	printed	selected
accomplished	cleared	detected	formed	maintained	produced	served
achieved	coded	determined	formulated	managed	protected	shaped
acquired	collaborated	developed	fostered	marketed	provided	shared
activated	compared	devised	founded	mastered	publicized	showed
adapted	compiled	directed	functioned	measured	questioned	simplified
adjusted	completed	distributed	generated	mediated	raised	solicited
administered	composed	drafted	governed	modeled	recommended	solved
advised	computed	edited	grouped	modified	recorded	specified
allocated	conducted	educated	guided	molded	recruited	spoke
analyzed	consolidated	effected	helped	monitored	reduced	stimulated
annotated	constructed	elicited	identified	motivated	rendered	structured
anticipated	contacted	encouraged	illustrated	named	repaired	studied
applied	continued	established	immunized	negotiated	reported	supervised
appraised	contracted	evaluated	implemented	observed	represented	supported
arranged	convened	examined	improved	obtained	reproduced	synthesized
articulated	conveyed	executed	increased	operated	researched	targeted
assembled	coordinated	exhibited	informed	ordered	resolved	taught
assessed	corresponded	expanded	initiated	organized	responded	tested
assigned	counseled	expedited	instituted	outlined	restored	trained
authored	created	experienced	instructed	oversaw	retained	translated
balanced	critiqued	experimented	interpreted	perceived	retrieved	tutored
briefed	decided	explained	interviewed	performed	reviewed	updated
budgeted	defined	explored	introduced	persuaded	revised	utilized
built	delegated	facilitated	invented	planned	rewrote	verified
catalogued	delivered	figured	investigated	planted	routed	wrote
categorized	demonstrated	financed	judged	presented	scheduled	
chaired	derived	focused	led	presided	searched	

<https://www.smc.edu/student-support/career-services/student-resources/documents/pre-law-and-law-pathway-resume.pdf>

To help you identify what action verbs to use in your statements, here is a list of action verbs. Action verbs make your resume stand out. They help paint a vivid description of a specific experience, skill and/or accomplishment of yours. Spend some time analyzing your resume and determine the best action verb that you can use to properly convey who you are to an employer. For the complete list, visit the website link listed on this slide.

## OTHER SECTIONS

### OPTIONAL ADD-ONS

- Objective
- Summary
- Skills
  - Language and Proficiency
  - Technology-based or Computer Skills
  - Certifications

Now that we have covered some key elements of a resume. Let's focus on some sections of a resume that may or may not be a part of your resume.

**Objective:** A well-crafted objective signals to an employer that you are clear about the position you are seeking and the positions available with an employer. Objectives can also hinder your chances of obtaining an interview if you list an objective that does not match the position for which you are applying or if it doesn't support the content of your resume. For most college students seeking an internship, volunteer or entry level job within the legal profession, you do not need state an objective on your resume. A better way to share what you are trying to achieve is through your cover letter, especially since a cover letter is read first.

Next, is a summary of qualifications. Again, this area is typically

considered optional and reserved for those with more professional experience. The summary is the first piece of information an employer sees at the top of your resume. It gives the resume reader a concise introduction to you, your expertise, industry background, training, etc. It is a way for you to briefly tie together your experiences and help employers understand how your varied experiences fit what they need. It is a brief opportunity for you to communicate your experience, training and abilities as it pertains to the specific job.

For students and new professionals, you should list this section at the top of your resume, following your Education section. The skills section is where you might list any technology-based or computer skills as well as other field-specific skills like your knowledge of procedures, trainings and/or certifications. For US companies and academic programs, you should include your knowledge of a language other than English and your proficiency level. In the skills section, you should only include objective, measurable skills. Softer skills like communication and teamwork should be illustrated through your descriptions of your experiences. There is also no need to include random and unrelated hobbies.

## EXAMPLES of SKILLS SECTION

### **LANGUAGE SKILLS**

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Spanish – Bilingual

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS**

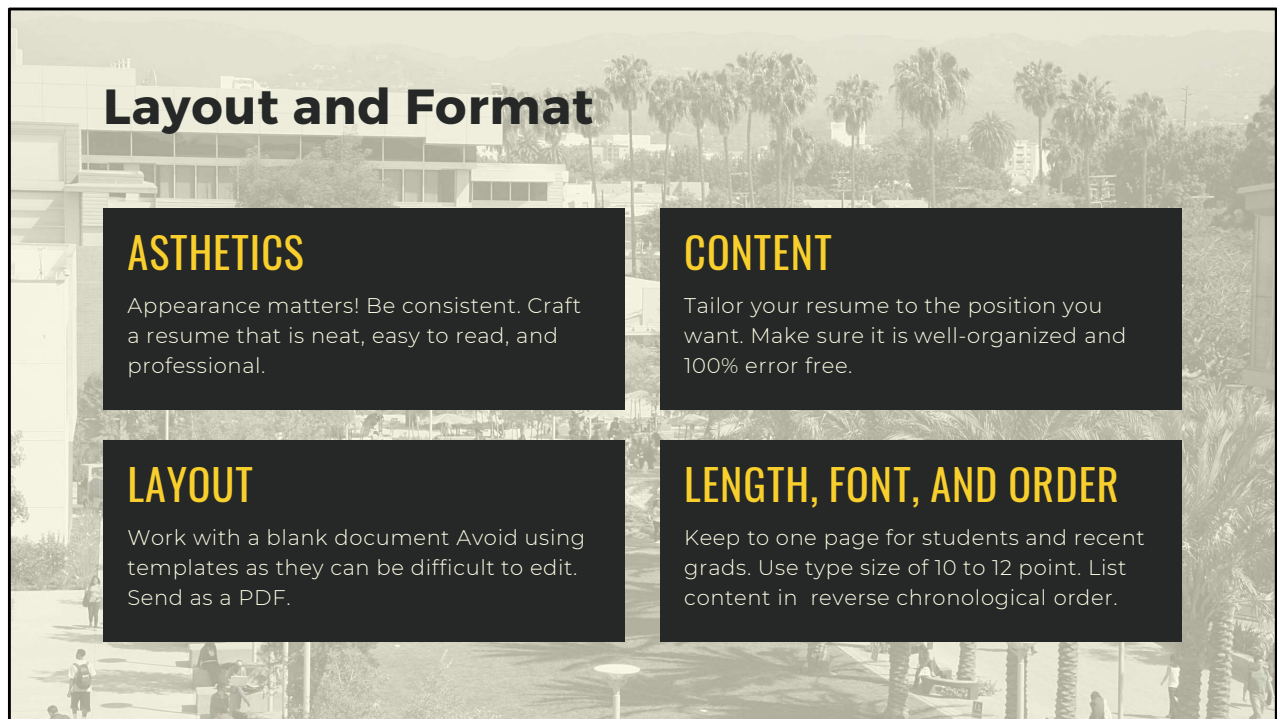
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Legal: Research (Lexis/Nexus), Advice, Document Management (MyCase and Clio), Electronic Discovery Response, e-Filing (One Legal), Billing Software (Protempus)

Computer Skills: Microsoft Office Suite (Outlook, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint), Google G Suite (Gmail, Docs, Drive, Sheets), Prezi, Keynote

General Office: File Management, Office Machines and Multi-line Phone Systems, Scheduling, Web Conferencing

Here are examples of accomplishment statements.



So, how should your overall resume look?

**Aesthetics:** You need to craft a resume that is neat, easy to read and professional. Appearance matters! Be consistent in font choices, bullet points, text size, type of heading, all caps, dividing sections with lines, etc. These are ways to direct the viewer's eyes to what is most important to see. Be intentional on what you use. Make sure not to go overboard or nothing will stand out to the viewer's eyes. For example, all your job titles should follow the same format. Avoid being too creative or flashy. You want an employer or academic program to be dazzled by your skills, knowledge and experience and not distracted by images or a busy resume.

**Content:** A resume is not an essay. You need to tailor your resume to the position you want, by listing the most relevant and important information first. Your resume needs to be well-organized and 100%

error free. Never misrepresent yourself. It can come back to you. Feel free to reach out to the Career Services Center. We can review your resume and provide you feedback. Don't rely solely on spell check.

**Layout:** Start off with a blank Word document. Templates are usually not recommended because they may not allow you to move information easily, change bullet points, or text sizes. For online job applications or when sending your resume via email or another electronic format, always save your resume as a PDF (Portable Document Format). Do not provide digital versions of your resume in Microsoft Word or Google Doc. Saving the file as a PDF, will preserve formatting.

**Length:** Given that you are a current student or recent graduate, most of you will not have a lot of direct professional experience. Therefore, keep your resume to one page in length. If you need more room, adjust the margins. However, make sure to leave an appropriate amount of whitespace throughout your resume.

**Font size:** Another way to fit information on a page is to play with your font size. The font you use should be easy to read. Avoid script fonts or fonts with too much design. The type size is typically between 10 and 12 point.

**Order:** Each section of your resume, should always follow a reverse chronological order, with the more important information toward the top. Chronological means most recent information is listed first, followed by older dates.

## THE DON'TS RESUME MISTAKES

- Include photos, birthday, SSN, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation or religion, etc.
- Copy the description
- Lie
- Use unnecessary professional jargon
- Use personal pronouns
- Leave grammar/spelling errors
- Include high school info, salary or work schedule requests or reference info

When creating your resume, there are also things you need to leave out.

Don't include any photos or personal items such as your social security number (SSN), age, sex, height, weight, marital status, religion, race, color, national origin, date of birth, etc.

Don't copy the job or program description.

Don't lie or provide misleading information. Be honest.

You want to avoid using professional jargon/technical language unless you are applying for a job within that field. This includes cliché words or terms. Remember, you want to impress employers and not confuse them with jargon that is unfamiliar to them or overused.

Always check your resume for grammar and spelling errors. Make sure to

have your resume reviewed by others, like the Career Services Center.

Remove any personal pronouns such as “I,” “my,” and “we.”

And the last thing you want to exclude is any high school information, salary or work schedule requests, or anything about references.

Following these quick rules will help employers focus on the content of your resume and that is really what matters most.



## NEED ADDITIONAL HELP



### CAREER SERVICES

*Major and Career Exploration | Employment Resources | Workshops*

Phone: (310) 434-4337

Email: [careerservices@smc.edu](mailto:careerservices@smc.edu)

Website: [www.smc.edu/careerservices](http://www.smc.edu/careerservices)

We at the Career Services Center at SMC want you to know that we are here to help you on your path to success. Whether you need help with your resume, you haven't decided on a major or career path or you know exactly where you want to end up, the Career Services Center is a great place to start as an SMC student. We offer a variety of resources and programs to help you explore your options or gain real-world experience. Check out our website for more information or contact us by phone or email. Our contact information is listed on this page for your reference