RESUME FORMAT GUIDELINES

- **A ONE PAGE RESUME IS RECOMMENDED!** If your resume is two pages, check the margins and the font size, as well as the amount of "white space" – these factors may be forcing it to two pages unnecessarily!

- **TO KEEP RESUME TO ONE PAGE,** adjust margins to .7 inches all around, and reduce the font size to 10 or 11 point. Major headings can be 12 point font. Your name may be from 14 to 18 point font. Times Roman or Arial fonts are suggested for professional appearance and "readability."

- **AVOID RESUME TEMPLATES,** which unnecessarily force the resume onto two pages with a lot of unused "white space," and with spacing that cannot be adjusted to condense the resume to one page.

- **TYPE RESUME AS A REGULAR DOCUMENT** in Word or WordPerfect to keep to one page; also, the employer may not be able to open an attached emailed resume in other programs.

- **HOWEVER, IF YOUR RESUME MUST BE TWO PAGES IN LENGTH,** put your name and phone number in the upper left corner, and "Page 2" in the upper right corner. Paper-clip rather than staple the two pages.

- **AVOID ERRORS IN SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND PUNCTUATION!** Can be an indicator of the quality of your future work performance!

- **USE QUALITY RESUME PAPER & PRINTER:** White or off-white bond paper, and a high-quality printer with BLACK INK.

- **MAKE SURE YOUR RESUME IS "SCANNABLE":** If the resume is sent via USPS mail, or handed to employers at a career fair, the employer may scan it and store it in a computer database. A "scannable resume" AVOIDS *italics*, underlining, shading, borders, and graphics.

- **ACCEPTABLE FORMATTING INCLUDES:** Bold type and "all caps" to emphasize major headings, and bullets to emphasize "skills summary" statements.

- **CREATE A HEADER FOR THE FIRST PAGE OF YOUR RESUME:** Name, address, phone, and email address – DO NOT include the word "RESUME" as part of your header.

- **MAKE SURE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IS PROFESSIONAL!** DO NOT use "cute" or "provocative" words in your email address.

- **DO NOT INCLUDE PERSONAL INFORMATION -** age, marital status, health status, etc.

- **DO NOT FOLD RESUME, COVER LETTER, OR OTHER APPLICATION MATERIALS;** instead, use a manila envelope for mailing.

- **IF POSSIBLE, USE LABELS RATHER THAN TYPING OR PRINTING ADDRESSES** directly on envelope; or, if typing directly on envelope, use high-quality printer.

RESUME CONTENT FAQ's, by Category:

OBJECTIVE

Do I need an OBJECTIVE? What should it say?

Although it is optional, an **OBJECTIVE** can demonstrate "focus" in terms of your career goal. It is also an excellent opportunity for you to emphasize your top skills. **Examples:**

- **Skills-focused Objective:**
  The opportunity to apply communication, leadership, and organizational skills to a professionally challenging environment.
- **Field and Skills-focused Objective:**
  A career in sales with opportunity to contribute communication skills, leadership, and planning and organizational skills to company goals.

Can I mention that I'm willing to relocate in my OBJECTIVE?

Yes. Adding this statement, "Willing to relocate," at the end of your **OBJECTIVE**, is appropriate.

EDUCATION

Is it important that my degree information is correct?

Absolutely! Errors on your resume are not acceptable. Check for the correct title of your degree in the Southeastern catalog, on your transcript, or on your academic department's web site.

Some Examples:

Bachelor of Arts, Psychology	**Associate of Arts, Criminal Justice**
Bachelor of Science, Accounting	**Associate of Applied Science, Industrial Technology**
Bachelor of Arts, Marketing	**Master of Business Administration**
Bachelor of Arts, Management	**Master of Arts, Organizational Communication**
Bachelor of General Studies	**Master of Science, Biology**

Should I list my concentration area, or my minor(s)?

Yes. See example of how to list degree information that follows this question.

What is an example of the correct format for listing my degree information?

Bachelor of Arts, Management; concentration in Human Resource Management
Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA May 2006 GPA: 3.4

OR:

Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA
Bachelor of Science, Accounting; minor in Management
Graduation Date: May 2006 Major GPA: 3.2

Should I list my GPA?

Only if 3.0 or above. However, if your Overall GPA is less than 3.0, but the GPA in your major is above 3.0, you can list your Major GPA <u>only</u>, and as follows: Major GPA: 3.0. If both GPA's are above 3.0, you can list both: Overall GPA: 3.2 Major GPA: 3.5

Should I list courses I completed?

Although optional, it can enhance your resume to list those courses that support your career goals. If you do decide to list courses, list course titles only – not course numbers. Also, list from six to 10 courses only, and those that are either requirements of your major, and/or even some electives that support your career goals. **Example:**

Major Coursework Included: Principles of Marketing, Consumer Behavior, Business to Business Marketing, Advertising, Sales Management, Marketing Research, International Marketing, Management of Organizations, Business Finance, and Public Speaking

Should I list class projects?

Yes, if they support your career goals, and/or if they highlight some special knowledge or skills you developed in working on the projects. **Example:**

Bachelor of Arts, Marketing; minor in Management
Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA December 2004

Special Course Projects: Participated in marketing class projects, including developing marketing plan for local restaurant, and an international marketing strategy simulation.

Could I list my Special Course Projects in another section of my resume?

Yes – you may list the **Special Course Projects** statement as one of the bulleted statements in your **SKILLS SUMMARY** (see section on this below). This would, in fact, be a more appropriate location if you're listing a **Major Coursework Included** section under **EDUCATION**, in that listing both "subcategories" under **EDUCATION** may be too much information for that one section.

NOTE!

- **Accounting majors who have completed, or will complete, the 150-hour CPA requirement should state this (e.g., "Completed 150-hour CPA requirement").**
- **Education majors who have completed the Praxis Exam should state this (e.g., "Praxis Exam Completed").**

Should I list every college or university I've attended on my resume?

It depends upon the length of time you were enrolled. If you attended another college or university for only one or two semesters, it's not necessary to list this info. If you attended at least a year, or if you earned an Associate's Degree, then list additional college or university (and degree info if applicable).

In what order should I list my EDUCATION info, if I've attended more than one college? And, should I list courses I took at other colleges, if I didn't get a degree there?

List most recent educational experience first, and other colleges attended in reverse chronological order. **Example:**

Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond, LA
Bachelor of Arts, Management; concentration in Human Resource Management
Graduation Date: May 2007

Delgado Community College, New Orleans, LA
Associate of Arts, Office Administration December 2005

Only list courses from other colleges - from which you did NOT get a degree - if they support or enhance your career goals. And, list course titles only - not numbers.

Should I list high school diploma information?

No – this isn't necessary once you're a college graduate, unless you have some major accomplishments such as honors or officer positions in student organizations. However, we recommend you list high school accomplishments ONLY if you do not have many in college.

SKILLS SUMMARY

What is the purpose of a SKILLS SUMMARY?

A **SKILLS SUMMARY** may also be called: **PROFESSIONAL SKILLS**, **KEY QUALIFICATIONS**, **QUALIFICATIONS HIGHLIGHTS**, or **SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**. It is a great opportunity for you to direct the employer's attention to KEY POINTS you should market on your resume - your abilities, personality characteristics, areas of knowledge and experience, computer skills, etc.

Is a SKILLS SUMMARY Optional?

Yes, but it is strongly recommend recent college graduates include one because it allows you to highlight those **"transferable skills"** you possess – that is, skills you've acquired in college through work experiences, involvement in student organizations, course team projects, volunteer work, etc. For an alumnus with years of professional experience, it may be optional, as their experience often "speaks for itself." Or, such an alumnus may want to replace the OBJECTIVE and the SKILLS SUMMARY with a PROFILE section at the top of the resume (after the header) instead. This PROFILE is a combination of one's summary of key skills, experience, and career goals.

Should I include a SKILLS SUMMARY if I have no experience related to my career goals?

Absolutely! This section is especially appropriate in this case – use it to highlight your personal characteristics and computer skills, even if not able to include statements re: relevant work experiences.

What is the best format for a SKILLS SUMMARY?

Create bulleted statements which describe specific skills, abilities, personal characteristics, and areas of knowledge and/or experience. Use the SUMMARY to tailor your resume to your career goal by describing your **transferable skills** if possible – i.e., those which apply to type of work you're seeking.

EXPERIENCE

Should I list every job I've ever had?

For recent college graduates, we generally recommend that you list only those jobs held while in college. HOWEVER, if you had some "seasonal employment" or other "short-term" jobs that didn't allow you to develop or apply relevant skills, you may omit these – you do NOT have to list EVERY job you've held in college on your resume.

Should I list jobs held while in high school?

No; the exception is if you held a job in high school that supports or relates to your career goals, or illustrates something positive about you – such as awards, honors, managing your own business, (illustrates self-motivation, leadership skills, and responsibility), or even a customer service job (illustrates communication and interpersonal skills).

In what order/format should I list my work experience?

Begin with the most recent job first, and list others in reverse chronological order. **Examples:**

Sales Associate, 2006-present
JC Penney, Lakeside Mall, New Orleans, LA
(Put job description here)

OR:

Student Assistant, 2004-2006
Office of Career Services, Southeastern Louisiana University
(Put job description here)

What type of information should I include in my job descriptions?

Describe **context of work environment** (type of business/organization, its services, products, etc.), especially if the name of your employer doesn't illustrate this. Describe **job duties, your contributions, skills and knowledge acquired, and results of your efforts,** if possible. Include **numbers or percentages,** if possible (of staff for whom you worked, increase in sales, etc.). AVOID "I" - start sentences with ACTION VERBS: see **ACTION VERBS & ADVERBS** on CS web site!

Should I list my internship and/or volunteer work under the EXPERIENCE category?

Yes. You may even create two **EXPERIENCE** categories: **RELATED EXPERIENCE** and **ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE**. If you have experience through internships and/or volunteer activities, or even part-time jobs, that **directly** "relates" to your **OBJECTIVE** (career goal), then you can list it under **RELATED EXPERIENCE**. Other experience less relevant to your **OBJECTIVE** can be listed under **ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE**. However, the single **EXPERIENCE** category will usually suffice.

ACTIVITIES & HONORS

What type of information should go in this category?

It's strongly recommended that you list extracurricular activities in which you participated while in college. Participation in activities gives you the opportunity to develop key skills employers look for, such as team work, communication, organizational, and leadership skills. More specifically:

Student Organizations: Include sororities and fraternities, departmental clubs, honor societies, etc. If you have served as an officer in an organization, or served on a committee, indicate this. **Example:** Society for Human Resource Management: President, 2004-2005; Vice President, 2003-2004. Also list any community service and/or fundraising activities you were involved in as a member.

Volunteer Experiences: These may also be listed in this category. **Example:**
Volunteer, North Oaks Hospital, Hammond, LA, 2004-present. (You may list a brief "job description" for this experience as well, if related to your career goals.)

Honors and Awards: These include honors such as "Dean's List, multiple semesters," "President's List," "Gamma Beta Phi honor society," etc., & awards: "African American Achievement Award, 2007."

You need only have one category for all of the above, called: **HONORS & ACTIVITIES**, or **HONORS**, or **ACTIVITIES**, or **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**, or **COMMUNITY SERVICE**, or **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**, etc.

REFERENCES UPON REQUEST

Should I include the statement: "REFERENCES: Available Upon Request"?
Employers will expect you to eventually produce either a page listing your references, or possibly letters of recommendation when they ask; therefore this statement is optional.