Compose a World-Class Resume
The first step to engineering your future

Heading

- **Include permanent and local address and phone.** Employers may try to get in touch on weekends or over school breaks.
- **Use professional email.** (PSU email is recommended)
- If using apartment or dorm phone, **make sure your answering machine message is professional.**

Objective

- **Keep it simple and broad.**
- **State only your current desires**, not long-term goals or plans. If objective is too long, employers will skip it.
- Can include interests, but be **careful not to limit yourself.**

    For example: Don't indicate a desire to work in the automobile industry and submit resume to a defense contractor. In cases like this, consider two resumes with different objectives.

Education

- This section should always **include major and intended degree** (BS, MS, Phd). If not in major yet, include intended major.
- **Minors should be listed** under the major.
- **Include expected graduation date** even if unsure. You can change it if necessary.
- **Always include GPA** – if not on resume, employers think that it is below a 2.0.
- **Students early in their academic career** may want to include High School or AP credits to set themselves apart.
- May also include special **certifications from high school.**

    For example: Airplane Mechanics Certificate, Smith Technology Institute.

- **Consider including a relevant courses section.** This will allow you to show a unique skill set.
- Be sure to **include any engineering design work.** This should be treated as a job in your resume.

Experience

- This is your opportunity to **showcase any engineering work** you have obtained. This is the highlight of the document, so be sure to use action verbs, specifics, and to quantify your experiences.
- **If no engineering experience,** DO still include other work, including volunteerism.
- **Help employers make the connection** – if you can manage a group of 7 employees at McDonalds, you can manage technicians and other engineers. If you can organize a project for Eagle scouts, you have skills to manage engineering projects.

Activities and Honors

- **Include any honors** you may have received, such as Dean's List, Scholarships, and Awards
- **Consider any activities** you are involved in. This includes professional memberships, student clubs and organizations, volunteerism, and sports
- **Include roles in activities.** For positions of responsibility, organize it like you would a job, using bullets.

Computer Skills

- **May apply any software or programming languages** you may have learned in a class.
- **Avoid citing Microsoft Word or Microsoft Office.** Your resume was likely created in MS Word. Specifically state advanced skills.

    For example, "Advanced Excel", or "Proficient in Access"

- **Can include systems learned early in academic year.**

Other

Language Skills:

- **Be specific here!** If you can read, but not speak a language, do not claim proficiency.

    A good guideline: If immersed in the culture, could you survive (elementary skills), or could you excel (full proficiency)?

<u>MILITARY (IF HONORABLE) AND SECURITY CLEARANCE:</u>

- **Military and Clearance are often highly desirable**. Include military like a job under the Experience section, and give security information even if expired. Include the date of expiration.

<u>WORK AUTHORIZATION:</u>

- If you are looking at defense industries of companies with security requirements, include work authorization status. Employers **will need to know this information.**

  For example: US Citizen, Permanent Resident, F1 Visa.

REFERENCES

- **NO references on resume.** Use this space to highlight skills!
- **References should be on a separate page,** with the same heading as resume.
  - Include 3 references.
  - Provide all contact info: name, e-mail, address
  - Should be from previous work or study, not necessarily engineering.
- **Check with references** to make sure it is okay to list them.

OVERALL TIPS

- **Resume should only be one page.**
- **DO NOT use full sentences,** only fragments starting with action verbs: Analyzed, Determined, Coordinated, Developed
- **Quantify your experiences** – Use $, #, %. It helps recruiters understand the level of success or responsibility.
- **If early in academic career**, OK to use High School information.
- **Check and recheck spelling and grammar** – your resume needs to be perfect!
- Use a **paper that is white or ivory** and is of a fine quality.
- Use only **one typeface and color.**
- **DO NOT use a Resume Wizard,** shading, graphics, or pictures
- **Check your MySpace and Facebook accounts.** Remove unprofessional content, or make it private. Employers are looking!
- **Do NOT use abbreviations** or Acronyms in your resume.