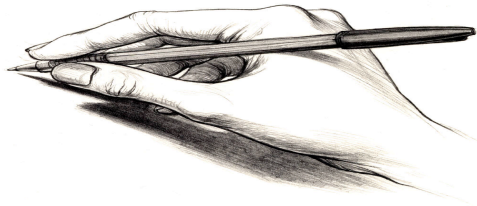




# RESUME GUIDE

SUNY Potsdam, Sisson Hall 206  
Phone: 315/267-2344 Fax: 315/267-2342  
Homepage: [www.potsdam.edu/offices/career](http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/career)

- See the Career Planning "Calendar" bulletin board, in the Career Planning Office, for information on workshops.
- See the "Career Student Computer" bulletin board, in the Career Planning Office, for information on resume printing and using resume templates.



## WHY A RESUME?

- The resume is an essential part of the job search process. It is used by employers as a screening tool. From your resume, the employer will decide whether or not to grant you an interview.
- This is your marketing piece. The resume is all the employer knows about you. It is crucial that you show ALL the skills you have to offer a particular employer. Match your resume with the job skills and experiences that are required for the job.

## WHAT IS A RESUME SUPPOSED TO DO?

- Serve as a written product that summarizes your experiences, abilities and future capabilities.
- Market you to employers and persuade employers to invite you for an interview.
- Act as a guide for the interviewer, prompting questions about your experiences and abilities.

## TIPS BEFORE YOU START

- Make an inventory of your background. Use one of the sample resume formats and go through step-by-step, listing your experiences, educational background, accomplishments, and skills.
- Focus on content during the initial stage rather than being concerned with having your format or wording perfect

**YOUR NAME**

**College:** (until mm/dd/yy)  
Your Mailing Address  
City, State Zip  
Phone

(section 1)

**Home:**  
Your Mailing Address  
City, State Zip  
Phone

---

**OBJECTIVE**  
(section 2)

*OPTIONAL BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.* (See section 2 notes)

**EDUCATION**  
(section 3)

**M.S.**, State University of New York at Potsdam, Potsdam, NY  
(graduation month/year)

**Major: If more than one, use Majors.**

Grade Point Average: If 3.0 or higher *(See section 3 notes)*

**B.A.**, State University of New York at Potsdam, Potsdam, NY  
(graduation month/year)

**Major: If more than one, use Majors.**

Grade Point Average: If 3.0 or higher *(See section 3 notes)*

Honors: If none, omit this. If numerous listings, use as a separate margin category prior to experience. *(See section 3 notes)*

Computer Knowledge: Say something like: Database, spreadsheet software and Web Page Design on Macintosh and IBM computers. *(See section 3 notes)*

Foreign Language: If none, omit. You *must* state your proficiency level. *(See section 3 notes)*

Activities: If you describe any of these under Experience, omit them here. *(See section 3)*

Special Programs or Special Training: Certifications, Licenses, and Workshops, Study Abroad, etc. If none, omit this category. *(See section 3 notes)*

Courses included or special projects: List only those directly transferable to the job for which you are applying. *(See section 3 notes)*

XXXXXXXXX  
**EXPERIENCE**  
(section 4a & 4b)

**Your job title**, employer, city, state date.

- Write the description of your experience(s) using past tense action verb phrases. *(See section 4a notes and section 4b note sample action verbs)*

**OR**

XXXXXXXXX  
**SKILLS**  
(section 4b)

- List all skills you have that relate to the position for which you are applying. *(See section 4b notes)*

**PERSONAL**

*OPTIONAL.* List interests and hobbies. If you have a great deal of travel, you might want to list it as a separate margin category or a sub category within the personal category. *(Section 5)*  
Travel includes: Germany, Canada, and England. *(See section 5 notes)*

**REFERENCES**  
(section 6)

Option 1- References provided at your request from Career Planning, SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676 Phone: 315/267-2344 FAX 315/267-2342.

Option 2- List your references on the resume. We recommend listing names and phone numbers for your most important ones. If the relationship isn't clear, describe the person's relationship to you after their name. Then write the statement, "Written references provided at your request from Career Planning, SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676 Phone: 315/267-2344 FAX: 315/267-2342".

Option 3- Create a separate sheet listing your references with quotes from reference letters. *(See section 6 )*

Option 4- Create a separate sheet listing your references without quotes. *(See section 6)*

## ADDRESS NOTES (SECTION 1)

Be sure to indicate the date that your college address will no longer be effective. Example (until 5/15/00)

## OBJECTIVE (SECTION 2)

If you have a specific job title, use it (e.g., Retail Buyer). If you don't have a title, but know the segment of the economy where you want to work, use it (e.g., Retailing). If you can't do that because you have a number of different career interests, omit the objective and discuss it in each letter you send with the resume.

### SAMPLES:

To obtain a teaching position in a Public Elementary School.

To obtain a General Music and Vocal Teaching position.

To obtain a position in the Human Resource field.

To obtain a position in Sales.

## EDUCATION (SECTION 3)

If you have more than one degree: List the highest first (Master's, then Bachelor's, then Associate's). List academic information and major for each school before you go to the next school. If you attended another college but received no degree, the last line in the education section should be: Other college attended: University/College Name, number of year(s) or number of credit hours.

### SAMPLES:

1) **M.S. Ed.**, State University of New York at Potsdam, Potsdam, NY  
(graduation 5/0X)  
Major: Instructional Technology Media Management, GPA: 3.80

**B.A.**, State University of New York at Potsdam, Potsdam, NY  
(graduation 5/0X)  
Majors: Elementary Education GPA: 3.2      Psychology, GPA: 3.0  
**Teaching Certification area: N-6**

**A.A.**, Mater Dei College, Ogdensburg, New York  
(graduation 5/0X)  
Major: Sociology

Other college attended: Clarkson University (1 year)

2) ***For Crane School of Music Students:***

**B.M.**, Crane School of Music,  
State University of New York at Potsdam, Potsdam, NY (graduation 5/00)  
Major: Music Education  
**Performance Concentration:** Voice (*or list instrument*)  
**Teacher Certification area:** Music K-12

**Grade Point Average.** Only include GPA if it is 3.0 or above. It will be interpreted as your overall unless specified otherwise. If you omit the overall and just give your major, you must give both majors if you have two.

**SAMPLE:** Majors: History (GPA 3.2) Education (GPA 3.3)

**Transfer Courses.** Your grades transfer to Potsdam but your GPA doesn't transfer. If you show your 4 year average, calculate it yourself and show it this way: Grade point average, both colleges: 3.1. You can list your averages separately with each school, but that's recommended only if Potsdam's is higher.

**SAMPLE:**  
GPA, both colleges: 3.1

**Honors.** You can omit Greek names for brevity (e.g., History and Education Honor Societies). If you have several honors, you should create a separate section titled HONORS. This section should follow the Education Section, if you create a separate section for honors.

**SAMPLE:**

- Freshman Honor Society
- Omicron Delta Epsilon, Economics Honor Society
- Presidential Scholar
- Recipient of the Newell Scholarship
- President's List (4 semesters)

**Foreign Language.** Give your levels of proficiency. Ask your professor for advice if needed to determine your proficiency level.

**SAMPLE:**  
Spanish - fluent in speaking, moderate reading and writing.  
French - moderate ability speaking, basic reading and writing.  
German - basic speaking, reading and writing.

**Activities.** Educational organizations in which you are active or hold office, sports, etc. If you held an elected or appointed office, list the office first (Captain, swim team; President, social fraternity). If you show both college and high school, put college first and indicate college or high school. You can title some of your activities for greater emphasis if you have 3 or more activities in a category (e.g., Leadership Activities, Music Activities, Sports, etc.). If you have some beyond those, list them as additional Activities.

**SAMPLE:**  
College Activities: Secretary, social sorority; swim team.  
High School Activities: Editor, yearbook; Captain, Women's Basketball Team.  
Music Activities: Member, Music Educators National Conference (MENC); Crane Concert Choir

**Computer Knowledge.** Be sure to include your computer competencies - employers are looking for these! If you have a very strong computer background and this skill is essential to the employer, you might want to create a separate section and highlight these skills. Include your software and hardware knowledge.

**SAMPLE:**

Computer Knowledge: Word processing, spreadsheets, database, graphics, Web Page design, networking, LAN management, programming on Macintosh.

**Courses Included:** Think about the job for which you are applying and if you have any courses other than those in your major(s) that would be of interest to employers, list them. For example, if you are a psychology major applying for a business position, include your business courses.

**SAMPLE:**

Courses Included: Accounting I & II, Corporate Finance, Marketing, Financial Management.

**Special Projects/Research:** Again, think in terms of your expertise and what relates to the job for which you are applying. If you have completed a research project or a special study, list it. For instance, if you are seeking an environmental job and you completed a project that relates directly to that area include the name of the project in quotes and a one or two line description that highlights your project. If you have completed research either through a student assistant position, senior seminar or special project, be sure to highlight it. This will be especially important for the graduate school resume. Remember, they are looking for your academic ability and research capabilities. If you have a great deal of research, you should think about making this a separate margin term.

**SAMPLE:**

“Senior Seminar: Phytoremediation,” Compiled research to determine the environmental importance of using plants to clean the environment. Presented research findings to faculty and students.

“SONY Corporation: A Financial Analysis,” Researched five years of annual reports, SEC 20-F forms, periodicals and journals. Evaluated performance based on derived ratios and trend data.



## FUNCTIONAL RESUME EXPERIENCE (SECTION 4A)

**Margin Titles:** If you have a left margin title with several words (for example, BUSINESS RELATED EXPERIENCE), list the words vertically - BUSINESS on top, RELATED next, then EXPERIENCE on the bottom. Make sure your description starts on the same line as your first margin title. Be sure to be descriptive when labeling your experience section, for example: COUNSELING RELATED EXPERIENCE, TEACHING RELATED EXPERIENCE OR BUSINESS RELATED EXPERIENCE.

**Listing Your Experiences:** Listing your experiences in chronological order isn't necessary and it's not always helpful. Employers are busy and want to quickly scan resumes. The first thing the employer will be looking for is the experiences you have that relate to the job for which you are applying. If you have paid or unpaid experiences related to your career, show those first. Then move down to categories indirectly related to the career. This category can be labeled XXX Related Experience. When you're finished with those, you can put the rest in chronological order or group them in a summary statement in the Additional Experience category.

**Describing Your Experiences:** List your position first and then the employer and the geographic location to the right. Place dates at the end of the title line or at the end of the experience description. This decreases the emphasis on the dates and highlights what you have to offer. Even if your job is still in progress (RA, PACES, work-study, etc.), write in the past tense as though you've graduated. The resume should show your status at the time it is being read. When you describe your experience, describe yourself doing it so the employer can appreciate how you might be of value to them in the future. Communicate quantity, quality and results. (NOTE: Be sure to keep the format of your experience listing consistent, either in bulleted or paragraph format. They are different on these samples to illustrate various formats.)

### FUNCTIONAL RESUME SECTION SAMPLES:

**RETAIL  
EXPERIENCE**

Sales Associate, Smidley Department Stores, Western, NY. 1999-2000  
Served customers courteously under rushed conditions. Kept over 500 items organized on shelves and balanced cash receipts of over \$5,000 daily. Closed and secured the store. Based on my performance, was asked to return the following summer.

**STUDENT  
TEACHING**

Westhill Elementary Schools, Albany, NY. (Spring '02)

- Instructed 2nd through 5th grade general music classes.
- Directed and assisted with choreography for a 65 student select group in preparation for the upcoming Spring concert.
- Sponsor Teacher: Mrs. Arlene West

**ADDITIONAL  
EXPERIENCE**

Summer and school year part-time jobs have included fast food counter person, sales clerk, lifeguard, and college library clerk. (6/97 - 8/02)

**ADDITIONAL  
EXPERIENCE**

Or use this if it fits: Accepted responsibility for approximately 45% of my college costs, financing this through work, merit scholarships (if applicable) and loans. Summer and school year part-time jobs included: fast food counter person, sales clerk, independent house painter, lifeguard, and college library clerk.

## SKILLS RESUME EXPERIENCE (SECTION 4B)

This section will focus on the skills you are marketing. The best approach in developing a skills resume is to analyze the job announcement for the skills they are seeking in a candidate. For example, if the ad is for a Human Resource Trainer and calls for strong communication, presentation, training and computer knowledge, then you certainly want to list any of these skills you have on your resume.

### SAMPLE SKILLS RESUME SECTION:

#### HUMAN RESOURCE SKILLS

#### Communications:

- Created publications and marketing pieces to market services to XXX.
- Published weekly newsletters and company manuals.

#### Presentation:

- Developed various educational materials and conducted classroom presentations.
- Facilitated a variety of workshops in the college residence halls.

#### Training/Teaching:

- Conducted orientation for new employees.
- Skilled in group development and presentations.

#### Leadership:

- Held a variety of offices that included: President of the Campus Union Board,
- Vice President of the Economics Club and Hall Council Member.
- Facilitated a variety of Hall programs.

### RESUME ACTION VERBS

Following is a list of action verbs to assist you with wording. Don't use the same word(s) repetitively! This list certainly isn't complete but it should give you ideas.

Accomplished	competed	eliminated	introduced	projected	selected
achieved	compiled	enabled	invented	promoted	serve
adjusted	completed	encouraged	investigated	proposed	simplified
administered	composed	enlisted	launched	provided	sold
advanced	conducted	established	learned	publicize	solved
advertised	consulted	estimated	lectured	published	sorted
advised	contracted	evaluated	led	purchased	specified
allocated	contributed	examined	maintained	read	spoke
analyzed	controlled	expanded	managed	recommended	stimulate
appraised	converted	explained	marketed	reconciled	stocked
approved	convinced	focused	mediated	recruited	strengthened
arranged	cooperated	followed	memorized	reduced	studied
assembled	coordinated	founded	moderated	referred	suggested
assigned	corrected	gathered	monitored	regulated	summarized
assisted	counseled	grouped	motivated	remodeled	supervised
attained	created	guided	negotiated	repaired	tabulated
audited	criticized	illustrated	operated	reported	taught
awarded	decided	improved	organized	represented	telephoned
balanced	decreased	increased	originated	researched	trained
budgeted	defined	indexed	participated	resolved	translate
built	delegated	influenced	performed	restored	traveled
calculated	demonstrated	informed	persuaded	reversed	tutored
cataloged	designed	initiated	persisted	reviewed	updated
chaired	diagrammed	inspected	planned	revised	upgraded
clarified	directed	installed	prepared	risked	used
coached	disapproved	instructed	presented	saved	validated
collected	distributed	interpreted	presided	scheduled	worked
compared	drafted	interviewed	produced	secured	

### PERSONAL (SECTION 5)

Do not show age, health, or marital status. Fair Employment Regulations have made asking these questions illegal. Interests and hobbies are helpful for conversation to set you and the interviewer at ease. You may change the margin term to **INTERESTS** vs. **PERSONAL**.

**SAMPLE:  
PERSONAL**

Interests: Enjoy sailing, collecting baseball cards, long-distance running  
Travel: Germany, Canada, Mexico and most of the US.

### REFERENCES (SECTION 6)

As part of the job application process, you will be asked to provide your prospective employer with names and written references of people who can speak on your behalf about your abilities and experiences. References can include professors, former and current employers, advisors of organizations and sponsor teachers.

**OPTION #1** - In your reference section, state that references are available at Career Planning.

**SAMPLE:  
REFERENCES**

References provided at your request from Career Planning, SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676. Phone: 315/267-2344 Fax: 315/267-2342

**OPTION #2** - List your references right on your resume. Include the reference person's information.

**SAMPLE:  
REFERENCES**

Dr. John Doe  
Chair of Psychology  
122 Flagg Hall  
SUNY Potsdam  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
315/268-9807



---

---

**ADAM SMITH**  
38 Elm Street  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
(315)222-1212

---

---

**REFERENCES**

Reference letters from the following people are available from: Career Planning Office, SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676. Phone: (315) 267-2344 FAX: (315) 267-2342

**Mrs. Mary Smith**  
**Grade 6 Teacher**  
Bergen Central School  
Westport, NY 25675  
Phone: (315) 989-9088

“ Adam has developed an excellent rapport with the students, parents and other faculty. He displays an unending commitment to provide a quality education to each student.”

**Mr. James Pike**  
**Principal**  
Ridgeport Elementary School  
Ridgeport, NY 89767  
Phone: (315) 897-9807

“ ... adept in classroom management techniques and acquiring the respect of students.”

**Ms. Maria Parsons**  
**Sponsor Teacher**  
Highland Central School  
Smithville, NY 27898  
Phone: (315) 897-9087

“ ... provides interesting, motivating and challenging assignments. Shows a genuine interest in the students and sensitivity to each child’s individual needs.”

**Mr. Edward Ryan**  
**Sponsor Teacher**  
Lawrence Elementary  
Lawrence, NY 45999  
Phone: (315) 678-9807

“...has a high level of maturity and confidence to work well with children. Accepts challenges with confidence and creative response.”

**OPTION #4** - List your references and not include quotes from reference letters on a separate sheet of paper.  
*Be sure to use an entire separate sheet of paper.*

**JANE DOE**  
12 Elm Street  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
(315) 267-9988

---

### **REFERENCES**

Reference letters from the following persons are available from: Career Planning Office, SUNY Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676. Phone: (315) 267-2344 FAX: (315) 267-2342

**Mr. Jim Smith, President**  
AT&T Technologies  
223 Jones Rd.  
Hicksville, NY 45544  
Business Phone: (716) 222-6767

**Ms. Sarah Peter**  
**Director of Human Resources**  
Peterson Company  
123 Commercial Blvd.  
Albany, NY 44553  
Business Phone: (918) 334-9090

**Dr. Cynthia Lowe**  
**Professor of Chemistry**  
SUNY Potsdam  
34 Stowell Hall  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
Business Phone: (315) 456-9898

**Dr. Albert Jones**  
**Professor of Physics**  
SUNY Potsdam  
89 Timmerman Hall  
Potsdam, NY 13676  
Business Phone: (315) 456-9090

---

### **COVER LETTERS**

A cover letter should always accompany your resume and reference sheet (if you choose that option). Your cover letter will help bridge the gap between the resume and the job. It is the first correspondence the employer will see - and you will be judged on the communication skills demonstrated in your cover letter. The first paragraph should explain your desire to be a candidate, the second paragraph will highlight the skills you have to offer that employer, and in the third you will try to set up an interview. *For more information on cover letters, see our Letter Writing Guide and sample letters available in the Career Planning Office.*

### **TYPING, PRINTING AND MAILING YOUR RESUME**

You can type your resume on the Career Planning student computer. This computer is designated for student and alumni use for creating and printing resume(s)/cover letters(s) and searching for internship or job listings. Sign up is required for use of the student computer. You must bring in a disk on which to save your resume or you can purchase a disk for \$2.00 with the resume templates on it. Resume templates are available for Word on Macintosh and IBM compatible systems.

**PRINTING** Laser quality black print on quality white or light colored paper is your best approach. Your paper should be a heavy weight (25% cotton blend). You can be sure that your resume will be electronically processed, even if only by a photocopy machine. We suggest using white or ivory as it reproduces the best. If you have a second page, be sure to put your name on the second page in the event the two should become separated.

**MAILING** Don't staple your resume or letters. Mail your materials in a 9 x 12 envelope.

## RESUME QUALITY CHECKLIST - Can you answer yes to all of the following questions?

### Appearance and Format

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the type sharp, clean, easy to read and the paper spotless?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you used an attractive business like style that will fax well?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the copy neatly centered and nicely balanced on the page?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your typed copy free of errors, strikeovers and obvious erasures or white out?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you selected a high quality grade bond paper no larger than 8 1/2 x 11?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you been consistent in use of indentation, underscoring, capitalizing and spacing?

### Organization

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your name (in caps), address and telephone number (and business phone number, if including such would not involve a risk for you) placed at the top of the first page?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your name and page number on each additional page?
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you are a recent recipient of a degree which lends major support to your objective, is your Education paragraph close to your Objective?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your highest educational accomplishment listed first in your Education paragraph?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your resume written for the reader? Does it read down the page and then across the page from most important to least important to the reader?

### Content

- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you included every major, significant factor that could serve as an asset for you relative to the types of jobs you are seeking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you phrased your resume to prove your ability to perform the functions cited in you objective or to otherwise reflect merit of you as a potential employee?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you given due emphasis to your activities, accomplishments and awards in college, in your community or elsewhere that reflect your abilities?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the content of your resume, wherever possible, emphasize results produced, interesting problems overcome, significant achievements, etc.?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Did you leave negative information (criminal records, divorce, fired) off you resume?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you highlighted the skills showing the desirable traits you have that the employer is seeking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is illegal data (pictures, age, sex, marital status) not included on your resume?

### Writing Style

- \_\_\_\_\_ Is the spelling, grammar and punctuation correct? (Has someone else proofread your resume?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you used short, concise statements to explain your experience/skills?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Is your Experience/Skills section written with past tense action verbs such as “directed”, “supervised” etc.?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Where possible, do you cite specific examples of successful performance supporting your objectives and do such examples quantify results (e.g. “supervised a staff of 25”, “managed a \$100,000 budget”)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are “I”, “me” and other pronouns omitted?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are marginal leads, underlined statements, or other “attention getters” stated in terms of your accomplishments or primary functions that you have performed?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have you eliminated all unnecessary military terminology and substituted equivalent civilian terms?

### Final Check

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Is your resume an attractive, interesting, quick reading, factual account that proves that your experience and personal assets qualify you for the job you are seeking?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Does your resume present your education and experience as evidence of benefits and abilities you will bring the employer?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Is everything said or implied in your resume true? Is everything written as evidence rather than a claim?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Have you had others read your resume and relate to you what they have learned about you.