Technical Resume & Cover Letter Writing



Agenda

Resumes

Purpose

Format

Components

Cover Letters

Purpose

Format

Components

References

















Obtaining requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.













What You'll Learn Today

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to...







Describe the purpose of resumes and cover letters

Identify the different structures of resumes and cover letters

List and explain the components of resumes and cover letters



Resumes



Why are Resumes Important?

Resumes are...



Your introduction
Create a strong first
impression



A highlight of your experience Establish your qualifications



A living document
Update on a regular basis to
reflect new skills



Formatting your resume



Formatting your resume

Chronological

- Presents education and experience in reverse chronological order
- Most commonly used format
- Easy to read quickly
- Most effective if most of your experience and education is related to the opportunity

Functional

- Presents experience based on skills and abilities rather than by position
- Allows for emphasis on transferable skills
- Most effective for career changers, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars

Many resumes are mixed format to highlight work history and transferable skills





1234 Street Name · Riverside, CA 92521 · 555-555 · First.Lastname@ucr.edu

OBJECTIVE

To obtain a position as a Laboratory Research Assistant.

EDUCATION

B.S. Biological Sciences, University of California, Riverside

Relevant coursework: Molecular and Cellular Biology (Lab), Pathology, Neurobiology, Neuropharmacology

LABORATORY SKILLS

PCR/Cloning SDS-PAGE ELISA

Electrophoresis Spectrophotometry Computer Data Analysis

Amino acid analysis DNA/Extraction/Quantification GC-MS

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant, Department of Molecular Biology, UC Riverside

January 2017 - June 2018

May 2016 - June 2017

June 2019

Investigated the effects on body weight and bone growth of replacement injections of thyroid hormone and drugs that inhibit thyroid hormone production

- · Collaborated with a team of four students to prepare bone growth media for 8 sets of experiments
- · Performed IM injections of varied concentrations in chickens to observe the effect on hormone production
- . Ran 80 blood samples through gas chromatograph to check T1 levels and monitor changes in rate of thyroid hormone synthesis
- Analyzed chromatography results and communicated them with graduate supervisor on a weekly basis

Cope Health Scholars, Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center, Pomona, CA

- Worked closely with staff performing tasks such as escorting patients, preparing charts, stocking rooms with supplies, running errands, answering phones, and light clerical tasks
- Provided patient care by taking vital signs, weighing patients, answering call lights and providing psychosocial support for patients
- · Assisted with accurate billing and patient records by inputting patient information into electronic medical records software

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Peer Mentor, Health Professions Advising Center, UC Riverside

February 2017 - Present

- · Share information and provide guidance to students on health professions programs
- Conduct 10-minute drop-ins to discuss service, leadership, and research opportunities
- Connect with students through shared professional interests in health careers

Team Lead, Best Burgers, Riverside, CA

June 2016 - Present

- · Place orders and perform cashiering duties in high-volume fast food establishment
- · Suggested new method of packaging orders which reduced customer wait time by approximately 50%
- Promoted to Team Lead after 60 days

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT/COMMUNITY SERVICE

Referee. Intramural Basketball Volunteer, Habitat for Humanity Volunteer, Mary S. Roberts Pet Adoption Center

2016 - Present June 2015 - Present

May 2017

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Computer: SPSS, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access

Language: Bilingual in English and Spanish (written, verbal, and reading)

SCOT HIGHLANDER

1234 Street Name • Riverside, CA 92521 •first.lastname@gmail.com • 555-555-5555

OBJECTIVE

Seeking Mechanical Engineer I position with Northrop Grumman

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering University of California, Riverside, Riverside, CA

June 2014

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Software: ViewLogic, SolidWorks, ABAQUS, MatLab/Simulink, AutoCAD, PSpice

Programming: JAVA, C/C++

Operating Systems: Windows XP/NT, Unix (BSD, Solaris, Linux)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Parker Aerospace, Irvine, CA April 2013 - Present

Mechanical Engineering Co-op

- · Perform research and development on Parker's fuel inerting system
- Design physical test housings to analyze various system parameters
- Modify and reprogram various Matlab files and graphical user interfaces utilizing Pro-E
- Reduce data in efforts to determine useful correlations between system parameters for specified tests

Senior Design Project, UC Riverside, Riverside, CA

January 2012 - June 2013

Three-Wheeled Vehicle Design Team Project

- Collaborated with five engineers to design and prove the concept of a fully automated three wheeled vehicle
- Designed and strategically configured the necessary mechanical and electrical components to test the model

Mechanics of Materials course, UC Riverside

September - December 2012

Centrifugally Stiffened Solar Sail, NASA

- Designed full scale concept of a self-deploying solar sail with three team members
- Constructed and modeled prototype deployment device for testing aboard the International Space Station

WORK EXPERIENCE

Housing Department, UC Riverside, Riverside, CA

September 2010 - June 2012

Resident Advisor

- Facilitated the personal growth of 550 residents, encouraged and enforced the compliance of community standards, and addressed various security issues in crisis situations
- · Served as the Leadership Advisor to the students and participated in training on inclusive diversity practices
- Recruited and interviewed future resident advisors as part of a selection committee

CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

College of Engineering Ambassador

January 2012 - Present

- Provide tours to prospective students, organized recruitment events and arranged on-campus interviews
- Represent the College of Engineering in a public relations role while greeting industry representatives

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND INVOLVEMENT

UC Riverside

American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)

Tau Beta Pi, National Engineering Honor Society

Pi Tau Sigma, Mechanical Engineering Honor Society

National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS)



Formatting your resume

Getting past Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)



Keywords

Review the job description to identify skills and responsibilities. Include them throughout your resume.



Simplified format

Columns, tables, graphics are not typically understood by an ATS – limit their usage



File type

.doc files can be warped when opened by hiring manager .pdf retains formatting, but scanned .pdf files are read as images and unreadable





Contact information and objective

Scotty Highlander

900 University Place, Riverside, CA 92507 (951) 827 – 5555

shighlander@ucr.edu
Linkedin.com/scottyhighlander

Always include name, phone number, and e-mail

Optional: physical address, GitHub, and LinkedIn

OR

Scotty Highlander

900 University Place, Riverside, CA 92507 | (951) 827 – 5555 | shighlander@ucr.edu | Linkedin.com/scottyhighlander

Objective

To obtain the Software Engineering Internship with ABC Company.

Optional: be specific or use it to explain a shift or "related field"



Education

University of California, Riverside

June 2025

Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering GPA 3.5

--OR--

University of California, Riverside

June 2025

Bachelor of Science, Biochemistry

Relevant Coursework: Plant Biochemistry and Pharmacology of Metabolites

--OR--

University of California, Riverside

Associate of Science, Engineering

June 2025

Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering, GPA 3.73

Relevant Coursework: Digital Signal Processing, Foundations of Robotics

Riverside City College

June 2023

Always include school, degree you are seeking, graduation date

Optional items include GPA and relevant coursework

Include associate's degree(s) if earned



Skills

Transferable

- Communication (written and verbal)
- Problem solving
- Project management
- Facilitation, mediation, referral
- Interpersonal skills
- Assisting, representing, teaching
- Organization
- Time management
- Goal setting and implementation

Technical

- Programming languages
- Software development
- Network technology
- Handheld inventory machines
- Technical devices
- Laboratory instruments
- Construction machinery
- Research techniques and tools
- Data science



Sample technical skills

- Programming Languages: C/C++, COBOL, SQL, PL/SQL, PLSQI Developer, TOAD (Quest), Oracle SQL Developer, Java, Basic
- Web Technologies: JSP, XML, HTML
- Web and Application Server: WebLogic, JBoss
- Databases: Oracle, 9I, 10g, 11g & SQL
- Operating Systems: Windows, XP, 7, UNIX (Sun Solaris), LINUX
- Framework: ITIL V3, HPSD, ServiceNow, Alarmpoint
- Scripting Languages: Python, PHP, Ruby, JavaScript, HTML
- Network: Design / Analysis of LANs/WANs, Routers, Switches, Firewalls, Protocol
- Communications: Digital and Analog, Fixed and Mobile Wireless, Satellite, Antenna Design, Telemetry
- Microelectronics: VHDL, FPGA, Microelectronic Manufacturing and Testing (MCM, SOC), Electronic Packaging, VLSI
- Specialized Software: arcGIS, Tableau, Oscilloscope, SCIEX OS

List **MOST** relevant skills at the top

Be prepared to speak about the skills you list in an interview

If it isn't relevant or you don't know it very well, don't feel obligated to include it



Experience

- Paid or unpaid internships
- Formal or informal faculty research
- Class projects, labs, extensive assignments
- Externships or summer programs
- Service in student organizations
- Volunteer experiences
- Presentations or public speaking
- Work experience that developed transferable skills





Sample experience

Senior Design Project, UC Riverside Web Application Team Project

September 2024 – Present

- Collaborating with a team of 4 interns over Slack to delegate tasks, track progress, and ensure project completion.
- **Developing a web application** with **Java** to streamline tutor scheduling for Academic Success Center.
- Developing JavaScript code and marking comments to maintain proper coding hygiene.
- Creating a PowerPoint of the staff training manual for a presentation and web application demo to 5 managers.

Start each statement with an action verb

Include accomplishments and numerical data when appropriate

Incorporate how you used technical and transferable skills into your statements



Your resume in action

Sample job description

Data Science Leadership Development Program (Entry-Level Position with a Science Services Company):

The DSLDP prepares participants for roles of increasing responsibility through a combination of rotational assignments, structured learning, formalized feedback, and mentoring. Program participants will have the opportunity to interact with senior Data Science and IT leaders and participate in various key Data Science initiatives. Program participants will have 2 one-year rotation assignments during the two-year program. As part of the rotational program, candidates may rotate through locations including but not limited to: Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, California, etc. Geographic flexibility is required both during and upon completion of the program.

Qualifications:

- Students completing a Bachelor's degree; preferred majors: Mathematics, Data Science, Computer Science,
 Computational and Data Science & Engineering
- GPA of 3.2 or greater
- Strong desire and motivation to develop a career as a future leader in Data Science
- Related work or internship experience strongly desired
- Ability to manage, plan, and prioritize projects
- Experience in data collection & analysis
- Demonstrated leadership aptitude, learning agility, and adaptability
- Understanding of existing & emerging technologies



Your resume in action

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Scotty Highlander

(951) 827 – 5555 | shighlander@ucr.edu | Linkedin.com/scottyhighlander

Objective

To apply mathematics knowledge in a rotational position that assists IT professionals as part of a future career in Data Science.

University of California, Riverside **Bachelor of Science, Mathematics** GPA 3.54

June 2025



Your Resume in Action

Qualification: skills

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming/Scripting Languages: C/C++, Python, SQL

Operating Systems: Linux, Windows

Specialized Programs: Matlab, R, Tableau

General: Data collection, data cleaning, data analysis

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Standard Software: Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Zoom

Languages: Fluent in Spanish and English

Separating skills lets you prioritize space on your resume

Even with multiple skills sections, stick to technical skills only



Your Resume in Action

Tailoring Qualifications:

- Related work or internship experience strongly desired
- Ability to manage, plan, and prioritize projects
- Experience in data collection & analysis
- Demonstrated
 leadership aptitude,
 learning agility, and
 adaptability
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RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

KITU Life, New York, NY (Remote)

Data Analyst Intern

- Analyzed 15 months of sales data to identify key trends and presented findings to management.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to prioritize projects supporting merchandising, pricing, and business forecasting in a remote work environment.
- Managed the development, distribution and analysis of a standard weekly, monthly, and quarterly reporting project to ensure various business teams received standardized information.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Afsana Hindi Film Dance Team, UCR

April 2023 – May 2024

June 2024 – August 2024

Member

- Exercised **learning agility** by memorizing 2-3 dance choreographies per week.
- Demonstrated adaptability and flexibility in the face of scheduling and venue changes.

How do I talk about experience?

TIP! USE ACTION WORDS + SPECIFY

Job Title: Cashier

Don't say: "Cleaned tables and as isted customers"

- What did you do? Processed food orders and performed cashiering duties
- What skills did you build? Reconciled \$1,500 in receipts every day

Put it together: Efficiently processed food orders and performed cashiering duties in high-volume restaurant establishment, reconciling \$1500+ in receipts nightly.

Accomplishments/Awards:

Don't say: "Got Arts Achievement Award"

- What was it for? Arts Achievement Award for leading the Riverside Arts Initiative
- •What did you do in the experience? Assisted in local communities to explore arts through collaborative work and engagement through interactions and activities

Put it together: Achieved the Arts Achievement Award for leading the Riverside Arts Initiative, allowing local communities to explore arts through collaborative examination, engaging interaction, and thoughtfully planned activities.

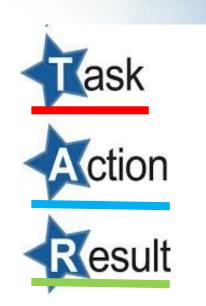


Experience Examples/TAR Method

Academic Resource Center, UCR Peer Mentor

September 20xx – June 20xx

- Deliver academic support for students encountering academic difficulty to aid in skills and study habits to achieve success in their undergraduate education.
- Tutor 1st and 2nd year UCR students in mathematics using broad-based strategies and techniques to promote critical thinking and problem-solving.
- Collaborate on a team of 25+ peer mentors to lead group study sessions to help nontraditional students succeed in their courses and their professional development.
- Designed and implemented new virtual strategies using Zoom & Slack to onboard new mentors and mentees during COVID-19 which resulted in sustainable curriculum for all incoming new mentors.





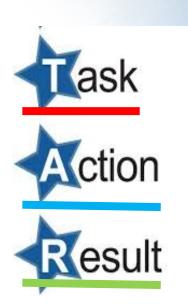
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Resume Checklist

- One page maximum
- Most relevant → least
- Tailor to the position!!
- Use industry language to describe experience
- All relevant experience, paid or unpaid
- High school experience (only if you are a 1st/2nd year)
- Avoid personal pronouns (I, me, my)
- Use appropriate verb tenses (past vs. present depending on experience status)
- Error free (both spelling and grammar)
- Save as a PDF



NOTE:

Employers only read for 10-20 seconds, make those count!



What NOT to Include in a Resume

- Your picture
- Your age, marital status or any other demographic information
- References, instead create a separate document (unless the job description says otherwise)





Cover Letters



\bullet \bullet \bullet

Why are cover letters important?

Cover letters help you...



Express interest authentically

Share your passion for the organization – connect to their mission, vision, and/or values



Connect your skills to their opportunity

Focus on the skills and qualifications they are seeking



Tell your story

Expand on important parts of your resume, or share informal experiences



Formatting your Cover Letter



\bullet \bullet \bullet

Formatting your cover letter

Review the job description

Data Science Leadership Development Program (Entry-Level Position with a Science Services Company):

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- Demonstrated leadership aptitude, learning agility, and adaptability
- Understanding of existing & emerging technologies





Scotty Bear

Riverside, CA | (555)-555-5555 | scottybear@ucr.edu

Same header as resume to "brand" your documents

Sept. 4, 2024

Ms. Christina Brown Vice President | Bright Green Talen 4500 First St., Los Angeles, CA 90210

Dear Ms. Brown,
I am eager to apply for or Hiring/Selection Committee/Manager" ving the job description found on Handshake. As are with a passion for people of positive psychology, I was intrigued by Bright Green's dedicated mission to support positive change within I for the prospective opportunity to apply my knowledge, leadership skills, and interest in environmental sciences in this role.

1st: Explain why are you writing, your purpose, and introduce yourself

nk you

I earned my Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies with a minor in Psychology at the University of California, Riverside. During my undergraduate experience, I wrote my senior thesis on how community organizations integrate sustainability issues into transfer on a cademic frameworks to prepare community members' efficiency in resource management. My educational preparation has equipped me to coordinate the coordinate of the coordinate

Body: Relevant points on qualifications, why you are a strong candidate.

Use student organization, work, volunteer and academic experiences.

The role of a Community Outreach Coordinator requires the ability to work independently volumes of customers in a timely and organized manner with little to no supervision. During the served 60 customers during the first hour. My team and I achieved a 15% increase in profit from successfully lead a team in this role.

Another important qualification for this role is the ability to connect with community members to raise funds for this important work. In my role as Secretary of Phi Delta Epsilon, I cataloged the expenditures during a community health fair, where I kept 100% accuracy of all funds being used and raised. This experience confirmed my passion for improving the lives of community members through advocacy.

Overall, I am excited for the prospective opportunity to contribute my educational background in environm fundraising skills to the Community Outreach Coordinator at Bright Green. Please feel free to contact me for your time and consideration of my application. I look forward to hearing from you.

Last: Further express your enthusiasm and interest in the position/company.

IIC RIVERSIO

Sincerely, Scotty Bear

Components of your Cover Letter



Components of your Cover Letter

Format

- Keep the contact information and format the same as resume (that is your "branding")
- Address the letter to a specific person if possible
 - Hiring Manager/Committee,
 Selection Committee/Team can also be used if you do not know the person to address

Your Name

City, State | Phone | Email | LinkedIn (optional)

Date

Name of Contact Person

Title

Organization

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Ms., Mr., Dr., (etc)

OR Hiring Committee/Manager/Team



• • • •

Components of your Cover Letter

Sample first paragraph

Leadership Development Program at Science Services XYZ. As a provisioner of scientific instrumentation, reagents, and software services, Science Services XYZ is on the forefront of facilitating cutting-edge research. It would be an honor to join the rotational program serving key Science Services XYZ Data Science and IT initiatives. Experiences and knowledge gained from my time as a Mathematics Major at UC Riverside prepared me for this position with data analysis skills, project management experience, and leadership ability.

What are you applying for?

Why are you interested?

Why are you a great candidate?



• • • •

Components of your Cover Letter

Sample body paragraph

During my time as a B.S. in Mathematics, I developed data **collection and analysis skills** both through applied coursework and a data analyst internship. In these settings, I learned how to evaluate sources of error in data collection and the importance of data cleaning when managing data-reporting **projects**. For example, I once faced a situation in my internship in which two outliers were drastically skewing the results of average sales data. After taking initiative and working with colleagues to understand why those sales numbers were one-time pricing deals, we were able to readjust the dataset to provide a more realistic forecast. Adapting to changing datasets and providing updated analyses allowed me to help the team achieve success. I would bring this same level of discernment to my data collection and analysis duties when supporting Data Science and IT initiatives at Science Services XY7.

Provide evidence of the skills you'll bring to the position

Demonstrate your skills – go beyond what is on your resume

Connect your experience to the description or to the skills you want to highlight



Components of your Cover Letter

Sample conclusion paragraph

I have a **strong desire to develop a career as a future leader in Data Science**. Connecting my **mathematics** knowledge, previous internship, and **leadership** experience from extracurricular activities, you can see that I am **motivated** to keep developing as a professional. If selected, I would bring **data analysis**, **project management** and **leadership** skills to this rotational program at Science Services XYZ. If you have any questions, please call me at 951-555-5555 or e-mail me at scottbears@ucr.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Scott Bears

Include next steps and tie your wrap up to the job description

List your contact information

Leave space for your handwritten signature – even if left blank



• • • •

Additional Tips

Language:

- TAILOR!
- Avoid unprofessional language
- Pick the strongest and most relevant qualities
- Elaborate with past experience as examples!
- Demonstrate enthusiasm and originality
- Proofread for typos, grammar errors, and spelling

Style:

- Should be one page (depends on industries)
- Use the same header style as Resume for polished look
- Font size: 10-12
- Margin size: 0.5-1 inch



References



References

A reference is someone who:

- Knows your work habits
- Has known you for a long (or significant) time
- Is credible
- Is not just a personal friend or your parent

Contact your references beforehand to:

- Ask if they are willing to give you a positive reference
- Double-check that their contact info is still current
- Verify name and job title



References Format Samples

SCOTT BEARS

City, State | Phone | Email | LinkedIn URL

Please Note:

Contact information on your reference page will be the same format as your resume

REFERENCES

First and Last Name of Reference

Position Title

Company/Organization

Phone Number

Email Address

Professional Relationship (e.g. former supervisor)



Next Steps

- 1. Create a 'Cover Letter Review' appointment with a Career Specialist via Handshake.
- 2. Upload your cover letter and resume to your completed Handshake profile.

Create an
Appointment:
ucr.joinhandshake
/appointments





QUESTIONS



Cocation

ENTRANCE IS ACROSS FROM ARC AND UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL, UNDERNEATH THE BOOKSTORE

Lowy

8 AM - 5 PM MONDAY-FRIDAY

website home drop in hours









connect with us!



@UCRCAREERCENTER



