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## **Blog Post: Best Practices to Build Your Resume**

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# Best Practices to Build Your Resume

Campus Life, General News, Industry, Student Life

Your resume is the first impression to potential employers, reflects your past and present experiences and achievements, and has the power to impact your future. It may seem overwhelming to write, but don't be stressed! We've helped hundreds of students with their resumes, interviewing skills, applying for internships and landing that dream job.

## Where do I start and what do I include?

If you haven't created a resume before, ask to read other student's resumes, your friend's resumes, or examples and templates found online. There are endless possibilities for the style and format of your resume, but let's focus on content.

Generally speaking, your resume is a compilation of you and your life thus far—your educational history, experiences and skillsets—all boiled down into one impressive document. You'll include your name and contact information, educational achievements, job experience and any certifications, awards or skills you've developed that are related to the job for which you're applying.

## What if I don't have work experience?

If you're a First Year Student or haven't had much work experience yet, it's okay! We highly advise that you include the following into your resume:

- Focus on educational achievements and highlights from college and high school. Consider your GPA, extracurricular activities, honors, awards and recognitions, and any volunteer efforts you've successfully completed.
- Add your school's name, your graduation year and intended major, and any scholarships you've received (including your UMPPF scholarship!)

- Describe any relevant job experience and how those positions helped you gain certain skills required for the role you're applying for. For example, if you worked summers at a local ice cream shop, you certainly developed customer service, communication and collaboration skills—all important as a future engineer!

If you're an upperclassman and have attended industry internships and co-ops, we suggest the following:

- Remove any unnecessary information from your high school experiences. Your resume is meant to be your most recent and relevant experience. As you grow and gain more experiences, you'll refresh your resume to reflect the changes.
- Share all your internships, co-op and/or industry experience details including the time frame, the company, your position and your responsibilities.
- Quantify whenever possible. You want potential employers to know what value you will bring to their company in addition to your education. Share how much time, money, energy, etc. you have saved while working at your internships and co-ops.

## How do I stand out?

First and foremost, you are all intelligent, high achieving, remarkable students with your own unique qualifications and capabilities. You've also been accepted to and attend a nationally recognized pulp and paper engineering program for which you should be proud—we certainly are! That being said, here are some pro tips to stand out even more on your resume.

- Keep it to one page. Employers, HR representatives and recruiting professionals read a lot of resumes. If yours is concise, clear and contains everything on one page, it's more likely to be read and remembered.
- Proofread, edit, and proofread again. Better yet have a friend, fellow student or mentors in a writing workshop take a look at it with you. You'll want to look out for typos, grammatical errors, and any edits that could make your writing clearer.
- Use active words like created, researched, led, directed. This shows initiative, responsibility and confidence and also is more engaging for the reader.
- Research the company and the position to get comfortable with what the job will entail. Then consider your own knowledge and skillsets and how they fit into the job's requirements. Don't wait for an interview to show them that you're qualified!

Creating your resume happens once, but you continuously update and edit throughout your career as you gain skills, experiences and recognitions and apply for different positions. That's why it's important to have a solid framework on which to build it so that you can share it stress-free and with full confidence.

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