

Résumé Tips

with **Joel Evans**

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Building a Resume | There are several standard expectations when building a resume. All general templates should have them: your name, objective, education, and employment history among other common categories like skills, interests/activities, and references. There are other specifics that are highly debated: use of color, photos, etc. The following are my own personal thoughts and tips on designing a resume that is a good fit for you.

1. Think of a resume as an **extension of yourself**. How do you want to present yourself? Many times, this is the first impression a potential future employer has about you. Showcase your organizational skills with a professional layout and your written communication skills with succinct and complete thoughts.
2. I give you permission to **use color!** But here are some things to think about:
 - a. How much colored ink will be used if it is printed?
 - b. If it is printed in black and white, will the colored areas still have appropriate contrast?
 - c. For accessibility purposes, be mindful not to use red or green.
3. It's okay to include **a picture**. If so, make sure it is a high-quality photo. Nice professional headshots are worth the money! It's also okay to not include a picture, especially if you are concerned about the possibility of discrimination. It's your resume; make it your own.
4. Have **consistency** in your documents. Most jobs want more than just a one-page resume. Common additional documents include a cover letter, reference page, and a writing sample. Canva has many modern and attractive resume templates. Use the same theme for your other documents as well!
5. Have **different resumes** and cover letters for all positions you are applying for. Tailor each resume to the job you are applying for. Use common language from the job posting.
6. Unless you have extensive work experience, your resume should be **one page** in length. The goal of a resume is to get an interview; it should not answer all questions. Use complete thoughts but leave the hiring committee wanting more.
7. Create an **extended reference document**. Use this as your primary resource for your own records. Create this document by starting with the outline of your resume and add additional information to help remember more specific details about your experiences. This is a great tool to reference before an interview or to help create different resumes for other positions. For example, if you presented a research paper or poster, your resume will likely only include the title, authors, and where you presented the research. If you write up an abstract or executive summary on this document, you can review it before going to an interview.
8. Don't underestimate the **visual design** when communicating your message. Many students are guilty of just saying they are proficient with Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc. I doubt you are equally proficient in all of them, and what does proficient mean? A better way to show your varying capabilities is to use a visual sliding scale for each software program, from novice to expert. Be honest in your evaluations.