

The Resume Project

Project Goals

- To gain an awareness of purpose and audience and how it drives the communication process
- To write based on a specific purpose and audience
- To gain more self awareness of your own career goals and how your educational and life experience fit with those goals
- To practice basic research skills

The Resume Project consists of two deliverables. The first prepares you to write a resume tailored to a specific job ad, and the second consists of the resume and a copy of the ad with highlighted keywords.

Deliverable 1: Job Market Overview

In a post of between 250 and 500 words, characterize the current job market in your chosen profession. Try to imagine what sorts of questions you'll have when you begin hunting for jobs, and try to answer them with some quick research (focus on your specific field, i.e. "mechanical engineering job market," etc.), or by asking an expert in your field (professors, supervisors, mentors, etc.). If you need a few questions to get started, here are some things you might consider:

- How does this year's market stack up against previous years?
- Are the sorts of companies you would be interested in working for actively recruiting entry-level (or whatever level you are at) positions?
- Is this a belt-tightening year, in which there are layoffs and the overall number of jobs in your field is shrinking?
- How much demand is there for someone with your particular degree and skills?
- Do your prospects improve if you are willing to relocate to another state.
- If you are trying to choose between a number of different specializations in your field, which of those areas gives you the best shot at a job or a higher income?

Make sure that you provide me with sources for your information. Give me links to internet sources, cite trade journals or news reports, and make sure to name any experts or other professionals you talk to ("According to so-and-so...").

Also, make sure your information is current. You can use old sources to get a sense of the history of your job market, but if you are telling me something about the current year, your source needs to be current.

Deliverable 2: Job Ad and Resume Draft

Deliverable

A multi-page document composed of:

1. An annotated job advertisement
2. A version of your resume tailored to fit that job advertisement.
3. A brief memo (200 words or less) explaining how you tailored your resume to the job ad.
You may also include revisions you made/chose not to make from the draft.

Description

Locate a job advertisement for a position for which you're qualified or (will be qualified when you graduate with your current degree). Save a copy of this ad (most web browsers will allow you to export pages as a PDF). Based on your knowledge of your field and the research that you've already done for this project, make some assessments about which requirements and keywords on the ad are the most important. Highlight these areas of the ad, and include any notes or comments you have that will help your instructor and your fellow students understand why those areas are ones to pay attention to.

Next, tailor your resume (or compose one if you don't already have a resume) to match the job ad as closely as possible, bearing in mind all the information and advice you found during your research in Part 1 of the project. Make sure to include keywords and ideas that you identified in the job ad as being particularly important.

Remember the basics of resume-building:

- A resume includes your most relevant experiences, skills, and achievements, not a list of everything you've ever done.
- A resume is meant to be skimmed and understood quickly (a commonly cited fact is that employers may spend fewer than 10 seconds reading a resume before making a decision about a candidate).
- A resume is not to get you the job, but to tell an employer enough about yourself and your qualifications that they can decide to schedule an interview.

Upload both the annotated job ad and your tailored resume as a single PDF. There are any number of freely available programs that will allow you to combine documents into a single PDF.

