

# CAREER GUIDEBOOK



KENNESAW STATE  
UNIVERSITY

## HOW TO:

Develop a Professional  
Identity – on and offline

Leverage Social Media  
for your Job Search

Communicate the  
Value of Your  
Personal Brand

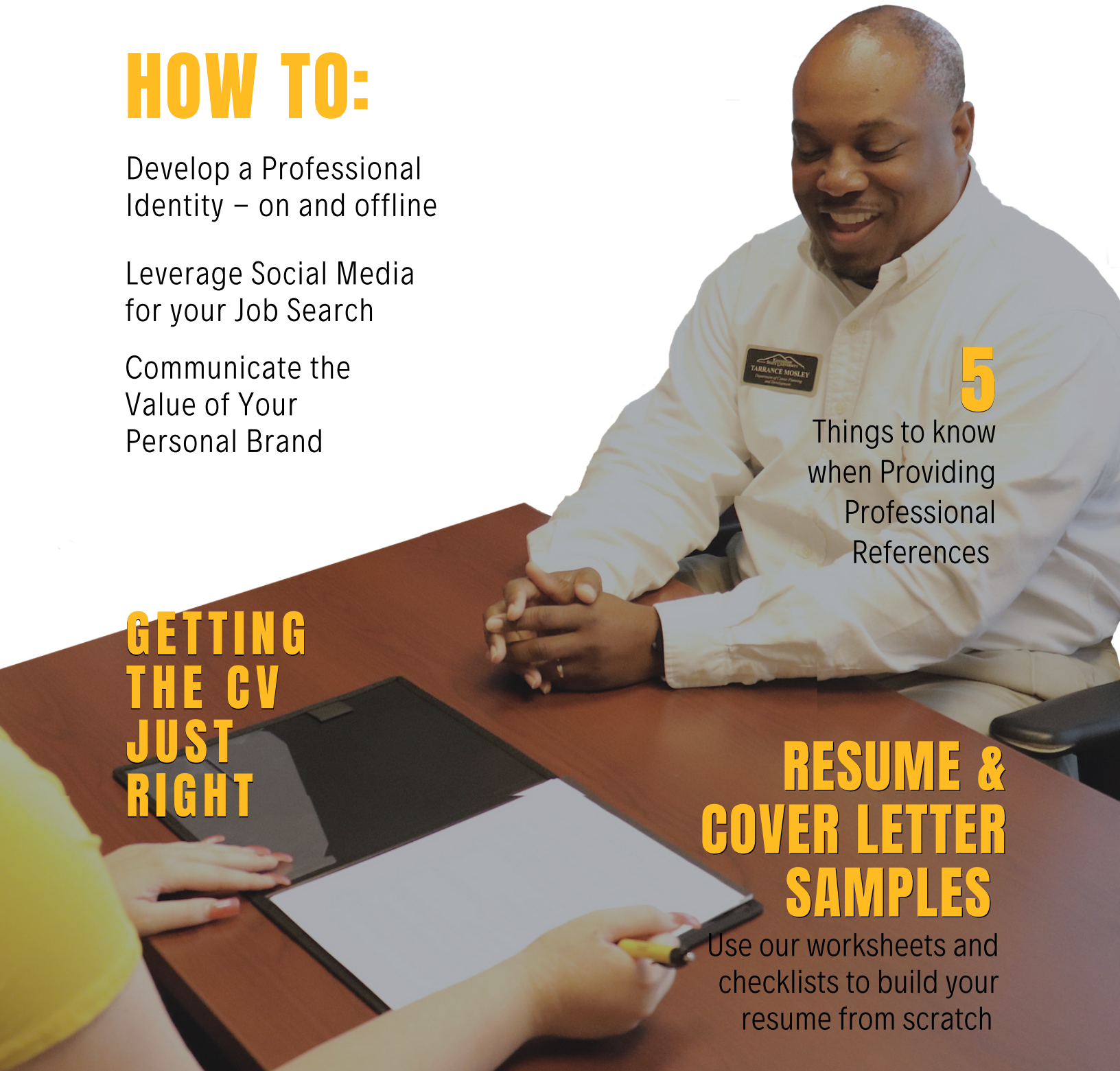
5

Things to know  
when Providing  
Professional  
References

GETTING  
THE CV  
JUST  
RIGHT

RESUME &  
COVER LETTER  
SAMPLES

Use our worksheets and  
checklists to build your  
resume from scratch



# WHAT DOES YOUR DEPARTMENT DO?

The Department of Career Planning & Development offers programs and services designed to help you develop job search skills and strategies, and to be successful in the pursuit of employment.

Our office helps employers recruit students for internships, co-ops, and full-time positions.

## OUR MISSION

The Department of Career Planning & Development shares in the mission of the University by educating and facilitating the career development of students and alumni, in preparation for the ever-changing work environment.

Through strategic engagement with internal and external partners, we provide access to services, programs, and experiences that develop competent and competitive professionals who will contribute to local and global communities.



One component of the career development process is creating a personal brand.

This guide will introduce you to the various ways you can create and portray your brand by helping you explore resumes, cover letters, curriculum vita, and social media profiles.

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# WRITING YOUR RESUME

This section will take you through developing a resume that meets your needs, including how to develop strong bullet points using experience from jobs, internships, class projects, and other activities, and how to determine what to highlight based on the job description of the position to which you are applying.

## WHICH RESUME DO I NEED ?

There are three basic types of resumes: Chronological, Functional, & Combination.

The choice of which type of resume to use really depends on what kind of information you're attempting to showcase.

As a rule of thumb, you want the most relevant information at the top of your resume. So, let's say your relevant coursework and projects are more closely aligned with the job you're seeking than your past employment. This may impact the order in which you include categories, the types of categories you include, and/or the type of resume you write.

Note that in many cases, your education—especially while you are a current student or recent grad—is one of your most significant qualifications, and it should be listed first, ahead of work experience.

**REMEMBER: List your most relevant achievements or highlights first in your bulleted lists!**

### Chronological:

Best for standard positions. Job posting says the ideal candidate is experienced in the field. Company culture leans toward traditional. Preferred by hiring managers and recruiters

### Hybrid:

If the job requires strong experience, but that isn't one of your strengths, you can add a functional element to your chronological experience. Emphasize relevant achievements in other areas that relate in less direct ways, like student organizations or class projects ahead of work experience.

### Functional:

Best for uncommon positions. Job posting emphasizes need for specific skills that you may have collected from a wide variety of sources or experiences. Company culture leans toward innovation. Great if you are changing careers or have a gap in experience.



# HOW TO DEVELOP STRONG BULLET POINTS

Maybe you have a great looking resume but it lacks the content employers are looking for. The problem is likely that your descriptions of past experiences are either too lengthy and are therefore being overlooked, or are too brief and are leaving the employers without the information they need to bring you in for an interview.

**Use this section to develop better bullet points or descriptions of your experiences.**

## CLASS PROJECTS

Sometimes, students feel overwhelmed when writing their resumes – concerned that they may not have enough to include. Often, our office recommends including project-based work from classes, to showcase the learning that has taken place while earning your degree at Kennesaw State University.

Just because you may not have worked in your field yet, it does not mean you have nothing to offer to a potential employer.

**The worksheet below helps you to think through how you might frame the projects you've completed in classes.**

Name of Your Class \_\_\_\_\_

Title of the Project \_\_\_\_\_

Goal of the Project \_\_\_\_\_

Group or Individual \_\_\_\_\_

What did you do? In what order did you complete various tasks?

What skills did you utilize to complete this (if not listed above).

Did you write project documentation? Present it to your class?

Earn a good grade? \_\_\_\_\_

Do this for all your major-related or industry-related projects. The more you brainstorm in this exercise, the more comfortable you will be relating this to real-world work. Typically, you would include 1-3 projects.

**Choose projects that show the most complexity and breadth of skills.**





## WORK, EMPLOYMENT, & OTHER EXPERIENCE

You will want to follow the same process as before when thinking about what you have done in previous jobs, internships, campus organizations, volunteer positions, leadership roles, and other kinds of experiences.

Use the worksheet below to break down what you did and what your key accomplishments were in those roles.

**Organization:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position Held (ex. Manager, Volunteer):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates position held:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What did I do in a typical day (be detailed in this brainstorming):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Other details:** \_\_\_\_\_

### ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS ABOUT EACH EXPERIENCE YOU WILL INCLUDE IN YOUR RESUME:

- Did I obtain any product knowledge?
- Did I train new employees?
- Did I ever supervise when the boss was away?
  - a. How many people have I supervised in this position?
- Did I interact with customers (including general public, children, other clients)?
- Did I ever have to speak in public, either in a leadership role or to persuade others?
- What results can I point to? Include things like meeting or exceeding sales goals, employee of the month designations, one of five selected for... and similar.
- What skills did I learn from the experience? Include leadership, communication, organizational.
- How did I make a difference in the organization?
- Did I come up with any ideas that positively affected the organization?



## HOW TO USE THIS EXPERIENCE ON YOUR RESUME

After you have completed this exercise, you can begin to write the bullet points that will accompany that entry on your resume. This worksheet can remain a tool for you to use while crafting those bullet points, which we also refer to as your accomplishment statements, (i.e. that which you most contributed to or excelled at within your position or role).

In today's market, a resume should be as targeted as possible, so you will want to highlight different accomplishments and skills used within a prior job depending on where you are sending your resume. Pay attention to what key skills or experience the job description asks for in the post you are responding to! This may mean that every time you apply for a position, you will need to review your resume and make adjustments.

**Keep these questions in mind when deciding what to include in your bullet points:**

1

Does this experience qualify me for the position for which I am applying?

2

Does this experience account for a significant span of time (generally a semester or more, especially a year or more)?

If you answered 'Yes' to either of those questions, you will put that experience in your resume. If you answered 'No,' in many cases you can leave it out. Obviously always consider your audience and what they will be looking for on your resume. Your 'Yes' or 'No' response could change job by job as you are applying – that is OK!

This is why most individuals have multiple versions of their resume. After choosing the items you will include in your resume and in your bulleted lists or descriptions below each, you can make changes appropriate for the position you hope to land. Remember, this is a tool to get you an interview, not an autobiography.

### **REMEMBER:**

**"Who is my audience? What skills, knowledge, and abilities do they need an applicant to have?" Ask yourself this each time you apply for a position!**



# USING THE JOB DESCRIPTION TO FRAME YOUR RESUME

In the modern job market, employers expect you to tailor your resume to respond to the requirements they are looking for. How do you know what they are looking for?

It's in the job posting, either in the Position Description or the List of Qualifications they are seeking, or both. Use this as your "cheat sheet"!

## WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?

What you've just done by completing the project worksheet is thought about transferable skills – skills you've gained in work unrelated to your career path, but that help you to easily segue into that field.

Often, employers are more interested in transferable skills than they are in highly technical, field-specific skills. This is because most employers are looking for teachable candidates, who can easily fit into their company culture.

**You might find some of these phrases or words (or any number of specific "soft skills") listed in the job postings you are applying to:**

- Strong communication skills
- Initiative
- Leadership
- Teamwork
- Ability to handle conflict
- Analytical
- Innovative / problem solver
- Motivated and flexible
- Vocational skills (skills specific to your industry)





## DOES YOUR RESUME REFLECT YOUR ABILITIES?

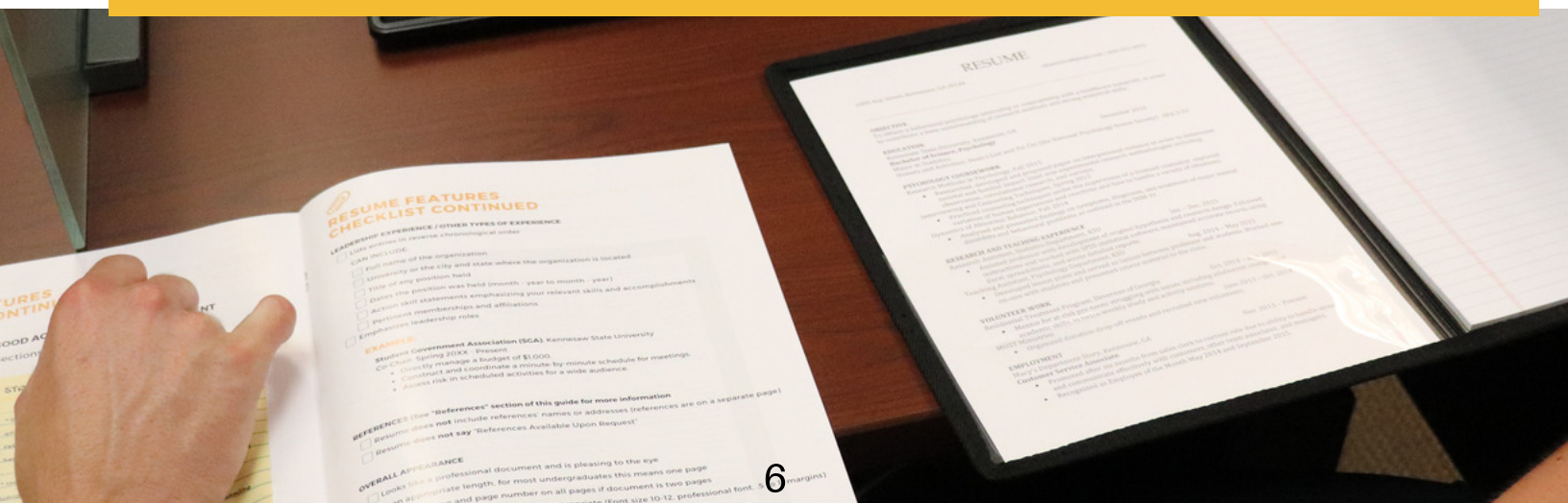
If you have the skills listed above, it is **not enough** simply to list them under a skills section. They need to be **demonstrated** in your strong bullet points, by showing the reader an example of a time you excelled in a role by using strong communication or leadership skills. Thinking about this is how you take your bullet points from standard to very strong:

**Communication skills:** Do you have the ability to organize your thoughts and ideas effectively? Can you express them clearly when speaking or writing? Can you persuasively present your ideas to others?

*Example: Coordinated with three local nonprofit organizations to market and execute an event for middlegrade youth, focusing on positive body image and anti-bullying.*

**Teamwork:** Can you collaborate with others to affect results? Do you know when to lead and when to support?

*Example: Developed a business plan for a popcorn machine, with a group of four classmates, including strategies for building consumer market and awareness, and how to secure investments and funding.*







# PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER

## RESUME ACTION VERBS

It's easy to see why employers would place a good bit of importance on flexibility and communication, when our world is ever-changing. As a result, our office is happy to help you in figuring out how to translate your skills and experiences into sentences that articulate where you've been...and where you're heading!

Below you'll find a list of resume action verbs. This list is simply to help you get started in describing your experiences, while not using the same words in each sentence.

### Communicate

Address	Contact	Document	Inform	Mediate	Present	Solicit
Advertise	Convey	Draft	Interact	Moderate	Promote	Specify
Author	Convince	Edit	Interview	Negotiate	Publicize	Stipulate
Communicate	Correspond	Elicit	Involve	Network	Publish	Suggest
Compose	Define	Explain	Lecture	Outline	Question	Translate
Consult	Describe	Influence	Market	Persuade	Report	Write

### Creative

Act	Customize	Entertain	Found	Modernize	Pioneer	Renovate
Broaden	Design	Exhibit	Illustrate	Originate	Produce	Shape
Conceive	Display	Explore	Imagine	Perform	Redesign	Sketch
Conceptualize	Dramatize	Fashion	Improvise	Photograph	Rehearse	Spearhead
Create	Draw	Forge	Invent	Pilot	Remodel	Transform

### Financial

Adjust	Audit	Calculate	Finance	Net	Project	Reconcile
Allocate	Balance	Control	Forecast	Prepare	Purchase	Reduce
Appraise	Budget	Estimate	Monitor	Procure	Qualify	Transfer

### Helping

Adapt	Assist	Cooperate	Facilitate	Orient	Rectify	Serve
Advocate	Clarify	Enable	Familiarize	Prescribe	Refer	Simplify
Aid	Collaborate	Enlist	Foster	Prevent	Rehabilitate	Support
Anticipate	Contribute	Ensure	Guide	Provide	Represent	Volunteer



## RESUME ACTION VERBS, CONTINUED

### Leadership/Management

Appoint	Coordinate	Enforce	Hire	Merge	Preserve	Reorganize
Approve	Decide	Enhance	Implement	Motivate	Preside	Reward
Assign	Delegate	Establish	Incorporate	Orchestrate	Propose	Schedule
Assume	Develop	Evaluate	Initiate	Order	Realize	Strengthen
Conduct	Devote	Execute	Institute	Oversee	Recommend	Supervise
Consolidate	Direct	Generate	Leverage	Plan	Recruit	Terminate
Contract	Employ	Handle	Manage	Perfect	Relegate	Unify

### Organizational

Arrange	Compile	Inspect	Organize	Reshape	Schedule	Systemize
Categorize	Conserve	Integrate	Prioritize	Revamp	Specialize	Tabulate
Classify	Diagram	Log	Process	Review	Streamline	Target
Code	Distribute	Maintain	Record	Revise	Standardize	Update

### Research

Accumulate	Collect	Determine	Examine	Gather	Interpret	Study
Amplify	Compare	Discover	Experiment	Hypothesize	Investigate	Summarize
Analyze	Conduct	Disprove	Extract	Identify	Locate	Survey
Chart	Diagnose	Dissect	Formulate	Inspect	Research	Test

### Results

Achieve	Augment	Eliminate	Extend	Map	Prove	Succeed
Accelerate	Complete	Exceed	Improve	Maximize	Reduce	Trim
Accomplish	Compound	Excel	Increase	Measure	Restore	Validate
Advance	Decrease	Expand	Launch	Obtain	Stabilize	Widen

### Teaching

Accept	Challenge	Critique	Emphasize	Indicate	Model	Reinforce
Advise	Coach	Demonstrate	Encourage	Individualize	Modify	Reward
Appreciate	Command	Designate	Excite	Inquire	Observe	Structure
Assess	Compliment	Discipline	Facilitate	Instill	Ponder	Synthesize
Assign	Consider	Educate	Focus	Instruct	Postulate	Teach
Attend	Correct	Elaborate	Head	Listen	Praise	Tutor

### Technical

Activate	Configure	Design	Install	Program	Regulate	Solve
Apply	Construct	Devise	Integrate	Reconfigure	Resolve	Supply
Assemble	Contrive	Engineer	Navigate	Rehabilitate	Retrieve	Train
Build	Convert	Fabricate	Operate	Remodel	Screen	Troubleshoot
Compute	Detect	Fortify	Overhaul	Repair	Service	Upgrade



# RESUME FEATURES CHECKLIST

Hopefully, you have developed some great evidence of skills and abilities with strong bullet points. Now let's focus on the ins and outs of common resume sections. Please use this checklist prior to seeking a resume review to avoid some very common mistakes.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

Located at the top of the page, does not take up an excessive amount of space, and includes:

- ☐ First and last name
- ☐ Address (optional)
- ☐ Phone number, including area code (writing "Phone:" is not needed)
- ☐ Email address, some derivation of your name that makes a professional impression
- ☐ LinkedIn short link (optional)

### EXAMPLE:

JOHN Q. OWL  
1234 Parliament Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144  
(678) 123-4567, JohnQ@Students.Kennesaw.edu

## OBJECTIVE (optional element - a cover letter sometimes replaces this)

- ☐ Provides a focus for the content of your resume
- ☐ Targeted toward a specific position or career field
- ☐ For those seeking an internship, includes the term during which you would like to work Expands very slightly on what key skill or outcome you might contribute to the position (optional)

### EXAMPLE:

## OBJECTIVE

Seeking an internship for Summer 20XX in the field of Civil Engineering, specifically Structural Analysis.



## RESUME FEATURES CHECKLIST, CONTINUED

### EDUCATION

Begins with the university where you are currently enrolled, typically Kennesaw State University INCLUDES:

- ☐ City and state where the university is located
- ☐ Degree you are seeking (e.g., Bachelor of Business Administration, Marketing; Bachelor of Science in Biology)
- ☐ Date or anticipated date of graduation (e.g., July 2018)  
Complete title of majors, minors, licenses and certifications
- ☐ Cumulative GPA (optional, and only if above 3.0)
- ☐ Relevant courses, listed by title and not course number, if different than major (optional)

#### EXAMPLE:

Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, GA

**Bachelor of Science, Psychology;** Minor in Management      Expected May 2018

Cumulative GPA: 3.15

**Relevant Courses:** Genetics I and II (lab), Anatomy and Physiology, Industrial and Organizational Behaviors

### EXPERIENCE

Includes:

- ☐ Full name of the company or organization
- ☐ City and state where the company/organization is located
- ☐ Dates the position was held (month - year to month - year)
- ☐ The title of the position held
- ☐ Bullet points emphasizing your skills & accomplishments, starting with a strong action verb
  - ☐ Does not use any "I," "my," or "me" statements
  - ☐ Action verbs in correct tense (past, unless position is current)
  - ☐ Entries in reverse chronological order (starting with most recent or current)





## RESUME FEATURES CHECKLIST, CONTINUED

### WRITING A GOOD ACCOMPLISHMENT STATEMENT

(See earlier sections if you are struggling with this)

WEAK	STRONG
Responsibilities included customer service	* Provided customer service through resolution of problems, explanation of bank services, and knowledge of financial planning, resulting in greater customer satisfaction. Selected as Customer Service Employee of the Month for June, August, and October.
Duties included monitoring staff retention programs	* Implemented strategic staff monitoring and incentive programs which resulted in enhanced staff morale, optimized productivity levels by 77%, and reduced staff turnover by 20%.
Responsible for clerical duties	* Successfully designed and implemented systems to streamline office procedures, increasing productivity.

#### EXAMPLE:

Home Depot, Atlanta, GA

**Technical Analyst Intern**, May 20XX – August 20XX

- Reviewed new project requirements using interviews, document and workflow analysis, and surveys.
- Communicated and collaborated with external and internal customers to analyze information needs and functional requirements.
- Utilized experience with enterprise-wide requirements definition and management systems.
- Worked independently with users to define concepts and under direction of project managers.
- Served as liaison between internal and external customer community and software development team.
- Collaborated with developers and subject matter experts to establish the technical vision.



## RESUME FEATURES CHECKLIST, CONTINUED

### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE / OTHER TYPES OF EXPERIENCE

- ☐ Lists entries in reverse chronological order CAN INCLUDE:
  - ☐ Full name of the organization
  - ☐ University or the city and state where the organization is located
  - ☐ Title of any position held
  - ☐ Dates the position was held (month - year to month - year)
  - ☐ Action skill statements emphasizing your relevant skills and accomplishments
  - ☐ Pertinent memberships and affiliations
- ☐ Emphasizes leadership roles

#### EXAMPLE:

**Student Government Association (SGA)**, Kennesaw State University  
Co-Chair, Spring 20XX - Present

- Directly manage a budget of \$1,000.
- Construct and coordinate a minute-by-minute schedule for meetings.
- Assess risk in scheduled activities for a wide audience.

### REFERENCES (See "References" section for more information)

- ☐ Resume **does not** include references' names or addresses (references are on a separate page)
- ☐ Resume **does not say** "References Available Upon Request"

### OVERALL APPEARANCE

- ☐ Looks like a professional document and is pleasing to the eye
- ☐ Is an appropriate length, for most undergraduates this means one page
- ☐ Includes name and page number on all pages if document is two pages
- ☐ Page margins, font size, & type are appropriate (Font size 10-12, professional font, .5 to 1" margins) Is free of typos, spelling mistakes, and grammatical errors
- ☐ Bullet points, bolding, italics, and/or other highlighting are used consistently
- ☐ Categories are arranged in a logical order, presenting relevant information first



## SAMPLE RESUMES

If you still need more help putting your resume together, you can find several sample resumes throughout the Department of Career Planning and Development's website ([careers.kennesaw.edu](http://careers.kennesaw.edu)).

To find the samples that might be most helpful to you, click on "Students" on the department homepage, then select your college, or likely college on the next page.

When considering these samples (and other templates that you may come across), there are a few important things to keep in mind:

- You should never copy the exact wording used in any of the sample resumes.
- Career Planning and Development does not recommend using pre-made templates.
- You should create your resume in Microsoft Word (or a similar program), but save it as a PDF before sending it to employers.
- Information on your resume does not have to be formatted exactly as you see it in the samples.

**Remember**, it's YOUR resume. It should accurately represent you and highlight all of your skills, experiences, and accomplishments!

To ensure that your resume is as effective as possible, apply the acronym C.O.D.E. - Make sure your resume is...

C - Clear and easy to read

O - Organized, with a logical flow of information

D - Dynamic and interesting to read, without redundancy

E - Error-free to showcase the quality of your work

If you still need help with resume formatting, or want to have it reviewed before you share it with employers, you can schedule an appointment with a Career Advisor by calling 470.578.6555 or by logging on to Handshake from the Career Planning and Development homepage.



# CURRICULUM VITAE

Another way to brand yourself is through a curriculum vitae. Often, this is another phrase for an academic resume. Though, in some other countries, a person might refer to a resume as a curriculum vitae (or CV).

## WHAT IS A CV?

The terms Curriculum Vitae, Vita, or CV are used interchangeably to summarize educational history and academic and scholarly accomplishments. The layout of the CV is similar to that of a resume but places more emphasis on teaching and research experience, publications (books, articles, research papers, unpublished manuscripts, or book chapters), and academic honors and awards. The use of a CV is preferred when applying for teaching or research opportunities, applying for fellowships or for further academic training. They are often also used by people in the arts or medical fields. Some research positions in industry may also prefer a CV since length is not a concern, which allows for completeness rather than brevity. While a CV has no single format or style, the following types of information are generally included:

### NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION

#### EDUCATION

##### DISSERTATION

- If you are working on, or have recently finished your doctoral degree, at least include a brief, clear summary of your thesis topic in the Education section.
- Including a separate one or two-page abstract of your thesis at the end of your CV is recommended, but optional. In this additional document, concisely summarize your thesis work, placing it within its scholarly context and noting its contribution to the field. Your summary should be comprehensible to readers outside your field, but scholarly enough to interest professionals within your area of expertise. If you do provide an abstract, write "(See Abstract Attached)" in the Education section, after the name of your thesis title.

### RESEARCH FOCUS OR SPECIALTY

- Begin with a short section specifying Fields of Interest or Teaching Competencies instead of a statement of Professional Objective which is typically included on the resume.

### COMMON SECTIONS INCLUDED ON A CV

- Research Experience/Projects
- Conference Presentations and Publications
- Fellowships and Awards
- Departmental and Community Service
- Languages/International Experience
- Other academic and/or professionally related experience

### REFERENCES

- If you list references, provide title, university affiliation, address, and phone number.

*The order for listing your credentials will vary depending upon your background and the requirements of your discipline. You will want your most important information listed first, and unlike with a resume, the description of your responsibilities and accomplishments should be comprehensive, but still concise.*





# REFERENCES

It may not be immediately obvious why Reference Rules are included in this guide on Personal Branding. However, the choices you make about which references to include certainly impact your brand. For most of us, we choose references who will speak positively on our behalf. However, truly strategic job seekers will choose a handful of references who can each speak to a different facet of their personality, or a different skill set.

REFERENCES SHOULD  
NOT BE FRIENDS OR  
FAMILY

## REFERENCE RULES

Carefully choose job references that complement your resume. A good reference should be someone who confirms the details of your resume and offers positive feedback regarding your work or educational skills and experience. Ideally, they should have known you for at least one year—preferably three. Your list should include 3-5 of the following:

- Former and/or current supervisors
- Former professors
- Former customers/clients
- Colleagues and/or subordinates
- Contacts from volunteer work or student orgs

**References should not be included in your actual resume. Instead, include them on a separate document. Do not submit references to employers unless they have been requested.**

- Call your references and ask them if they are willing to provide favorable feedback to an employer on your behalf. As an additional courtesy, offer them an update on your career and information about the role you are applying for.
- Let your references know every time you give out their contact information and thank them for their efforts.
- Keep your references informed of your career and educational progress and future aspirations. They will be more inclined to see you in a stronger light as you progress.
- Note that spending time communicating with your prospective employer takes valuable time from your references' workdays. If you plan to use these references over the years, you need to give something back. For instance, each time your reference supports you with a new prospective employer, send them a personal thank you letter or (at a minimum) an email.
- If you obtain the new position, call or email your references and thank them again for their support.

## HOW TO LIST REFERENCES

Stephen Jackson  
1000 Chastain Rd.  
Kennesaw, GA 30144  
(770) 423-6555  
stephen@gmail.com

Known for four years  
Former supervisor at ABC, Inc.

References should be put on a separate sheet of paper & not attached to the resume .



# COVER LETTERS

With most resumes or CVs, you will be asked to submit a cover letter, or letter of interest. Those are two phrases that mean the same thing. Our office recommends submitting a cover letter even when it is an optional part of the application. Your cover letter is your most customized submission. It is your way of directly linking your skills, abilities, and experiences to the job description. No two cover letters should be the same.

A cover letter is an introduction to your resume. Though you do not always need a cover letter when you are presenting your resume in person, it is essential when you mail, email, or fax your resume to a prospective employer. You may find cover letters referred to as letters of application.

When emailing your resume, the body of your email can serve as the cover letter, with the resume attached. In other situations, you will want to attach the cover letter as a separate document. This can vary, so pay attention to the application instructions!

The cover letter shows the employer your writing skills, which are important in any profession. It also allows you to highlight your skills and interests more completely than is feasible with the resume.

The following pages will explain to you the rules and steps to effective cover letter writing, and provide examples of cover letters to assist you.

## COVER LETTERS SHOULD:

- Always be typed.
- Always be included with a resume being mailed, faxed, or emailed.
- Be individualized and addressed to a specific person whenever possible.
- Use quality paper, preferably the same as your resume. White or cream is recommended.
- Emphasize achievements, but if you make claims back them up.
- Avoid the letter looking like a form letter; tailor it to fit a specific position.
- Be brief and concise. Like your resume, the letter will be skimmed.
- Your document should be one page with three (3) to five (5) short paragraphs.
- Not just regurgitate what your resume says. The employer is about to read that! This should add some depth to their understanding of why you qualify or are a good fit for the position.



# COVER LETTER TIPS FOR STUDENTS

## ADDRESS

- Address your cover letter to a specific person when possible
- If not possible, use the company's address and "Dear Hiring Manager"

## OPENING

- State why you are writing
- Indicate the position and your enthusiasm for it
- Express some knowledge of the employer and how you found the position

## BODY

- Tell the employer why you are a good fit for the position
- Highlight your education and experience as they relate to the position
- Connect the requirements of the job to your qualifications
- Provide evidence of key skills, experience, and personality traits that match the job requirements
- Use specific examples – but do not simply make a narrative of your resume
- Explain why you are interested in their company specifically

## CLOSING

- Re-emphasize your interest in the position
- State what your next steps will be (ex: "I will contact you next week...")
- Convey your appreciation for their consideration of you as a candidate
- Indicate the best means of reaching you

## SIGNATURE

- Sign your cover letter, if it's a letter you are mailing. Otherwise, you will simply type your name, or scan a signed copy if appropriate
- Possible salutations: Best Regards, or Best, or Regards

## FORMAT

- Ensure you review the "Formal Letter Template" for proper formatting on the next two pages

## GENERAL TIPS

- There is no such thing as a general cover letter! Each job you apply for needs a unique cover letter
- If you are given the opportunity, always attach a cover letter to an online job application
- If you are emailing your resume to an employer, your cover letter will be the content of your email
- Remember, your cover letter will be skimmed, so make sure you format the letter so the reader can quickly gather the important information
- Cover letters should not exceed 1 page with 3-5 paragraphs



## FORMAL COVER LETTER SAMPLE #1

**NOTE: THIS EXAMPLE INCLUDES “OR” POSSIBILITIES AND AREAS THAT WILL CHANGE BASED ON NEEDS. IT SHOULD NEVER BE USED VERBATIM.\***

Your Present Address

February 19, 2018 (*always write out the date*)

Ms. Jane Smith (*It's best to identify the actual Hiring Manager, if you cannot, simply put "Hiring Manager"*)

Title

Company Name

Company Address

City, ST 12345

Dear Ms. Smith:

**1ST PARAGRAPH GOAL:** 1) *Attract the attention of the employer and 2) demonstrate you have done your research on the company.*

I'm very excited about the (NAME THE POSITION) at (NAME THE COMPANY) because: (e.g. this is an exceptional opportunity to work in a... and/or as a Marketing major I am seeking roles like this to utilize my skills and experiences... and/or I have a passion for Marketing that stems from... and/or Mr. John James suggested I contact you about employment opportunities). I am especially interested in working with your company because... (*Insert your research from company website and LinkedIn...*).

**2ND SECTION:** *ID the **Job Responsibilities** from the **Job Description** and provide examples, where you have excelled: (see examples)*

I believe I will exceed your expectations because of the experiences and skills I will bring to the position:

- **EVENT COORDINATION:** As the Events Chair for XYZ Group, I have planned exceptional events ranging in size from 20-100 guests with creative themes and excellent attendance.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** As the Social Media Chair for (Company, Student Group or Volunteer Experience) I worked to create brand awareness by updating social media sites, including...
- **WEBSITE DESIGN:** In my (COURSE NAME: e.g. Information Systems...) course, I worked with a team in creating a website for ABC Company to enhance its marketability.

I look forward to meeting your team and sharing a more in-depth explanation of how my experience can help (COMPANY NAME) achieve its goals **OR** I would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you regarding a career with (COMPANY NAME) **OR** I would like to meet with you to discuss how I would fit into your program **OR** it would be an honor to serve as an intern for (COMPANY NAME).

Please contact me at (YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS) or at 555-555-5555 **OR** I will call your office later this week to schedule an appointment.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name Typed

*Note: If this letter is mailed, you will need to sign your name above your typed name.*





## FORMAL COVER LETTER SAMPLE #2

**NOTE: THIS EXAMPLE INCLUDES “OR” POSSIBILITIES AND AREAS THAT WILL CHANGE BASED ON NEEDS. IT SHOULD NEVER BE USED VERBATIM.\***

Your Present Address

February 19, 2018 (*always write out the date*)

Ms. Jane Smith (*It's best to identify the actual Hiring Manager, if you cannot, simply put “Hiring Manager”*)

Title

Company Name

Company Address

City, ST 12345

Dear Ms. Smith:

**1ST PARAGRAPH GOAL:** *1) Indicate why you are writing and 2) demonstrate you have done your research on the company or the position and have deemed it a good fit.*

I am excited to submit my application for the (NAME THE POSITION) at (NAME THE COMPANY), which was posted on your company website. I am an excellent candidate for this position based on my professional experience in customer service and marketing and my educational background in writing and communication, which is covered in the attached resume.

**2nd SECTION:** *Identify the **Job Responsibilities** from the **Job Description** and provide examples, where you have excelled. If the organization is seeking experience with event coordination, social media, and website design, highlight 2-3 key examples of how or when you have excelled in those specific areas. This section can be 1-2 paragraphs. It should NOT be a narrative of your resume, but should hit the high points of your experience related to this position. The paragraph style used here is a good format to use, depending on your audience.*

*This section can also include any other information pertinent for the hiring manager related to your personal motivation to apply to the position (in case your beliefs align with those of the organization) or if you are relocating or have other items that you might want to explain to the person considering you.*

**3rd SECTION:** I look forward to learning more about this opportunity and to a more in-depth discussion of how my experience can contribute to the success of (COMPANY NAME). Please contact me at (YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS) or at 555-555-5555 to further discuss the position and my qualifications.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name Typed

*Note: If this letter is mailed, you will need to sign your name above your typed name.*



# DEVELOP YOUR ONLINE BRAND

## CREATING A POSITIVE SOCIAL PRESENCE

Prospective employers and recruiters regularly visit social media sites to source candidates and learn more about potential hires they interview.

Utilize the guidelines on the following pages to proactively manage your virtual brand in order to advance your career. Invest the time necessary to develop, monitor, and enhance your virtual brand as it is a requirement for any professional who is actively or passively seeking employment.

**Profiles** – Think of your profile as your on-line business card. It is important for your profile to convey a professional message about you as a potential employee. Review and edit any information which does not meet this standard.

**Friends** – Keep in mind it is important to monitor the content on your friends' pages to whom you are linked. Review their profiles and any pictures they may post of you to determine if there is any inappropriate content you would like removed.

**Privacy Settings** – Facebook in particular has been known to change the privacy settings often on user accounts. As a result, it is important for you to review these settings regularly to make sure only friends have access to view your profile.

**Monitor New Information** – It is a good idea to use multiple search engines to find out what employers might be able to find if they search on your name. If you find anything which could be detrimental you can look into having it removed.

**Conduct a Google search on your name** – Use a private browsing session to do this, to see what someone with no connection to you might see. Keep in mind that some employers can get through privacy settings.

**Facebook** – This site has a more personal focus. However, many employers use the information you post to screen applicants. Employment has also been terminated as a result of this site. Use Facebook with caution, and monitor your privacy settings.

**LinkedIn** – The focus of this site is professional networking and they have strict rules about how to use the system in order to connect with people. Learn how to leverage this site in order to expand your network. In addition, many employers are now posting jobs based on your profile so this could be a great tool if you are actively seeking employment.

**Email** – Have a professional email address. Choose a host that avoids spam issues. For example, choose Gmail over Hotmail.

**Voicemail** – Be sure the voicemail greeting on your phone is professional. Every form of communication sends a message to prospective employers.



# USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR JOB SEARCH

## MANAGING YOUR VIRTUAL IDENTITY

According to a recent survey, nearly 92 percent of college seniors have a social networking profile, but less than one-third have used social networks in their job searches.

To use sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter most effectively, follow these 10 tips:

1. **Develop a professional presence.** What do people find when they Google you? Set up a profile on LinkedIn, which is a 100 percent professional network, and add professional details to your Google+, Facebook, and Twitter profiles.
2. **Fill your profiles with keywords.** All of your social media profiles should include key words and phrases that a recruiter or hiring manager might type into a search engine to find a candidate like you. The best place to find relevant words is in the job listings and the profiles of people who have the positions you want.
3. **Use LinkedIn to find your path.** Not yet sure what career is right for you? Browse through LinkedIn. LinkedIn offers a huge database of other people's career paths - providing info about companies, job titles, or professions that might be a good fit for you.
4. **Get personal.** When you're looking for a job, your online network can and should include friends and family. Parents, classmates, professors, neighbors, and other close contacts are the best people to provide you with "warm" referrals to the contacts in their networks.
5. **Be a joiner.** Another way to form valuable relationships is to join online communities with which you already have an affiliation. Once you're a member of a group, you can comment on discussions, meet people who share common interests, and find exclusive job listings.
6. **Tweet.** Twitter is an amazing tool to research and connect with recruiters, industry experts, and potential employers. Even if you set up a Twitter profile to "listen" more than you tweet, you'll get enormous value out of the information you'll discover. Plus, many organizations are now tweeting out their job postings!
7. **Blog.** Consider staking your own ground in the social media world. You can blog in writing or video about your career interests, campus life, travel, sports, activities, or anything else. Blogging (as long as you keep it clean) can demonstrate your knowledge and passion to a potential employer.
8. **Share.** One of the best ways to maintain a strong professional network is to support other people by sharing helpful information like articles, blog posts, and YouTube videos. A small, helpful gesture like forwarding a link is a great form of networking (and the recipient will likely help you in return).
9. **Keep people up to date.** Update your LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter status with information about events you're attending, books you're reading, or other career news. To remind people that you're job hunting, post updates such as, "I had a great second interview this morning — cross your fingers for me!"
10. **Use social media to ace interviews.** Before a job interview, study the LinkedIn profiles, Twitter feeds, and blogs of the people you'll be meeting. The more preparation you do, the more confident you'll feel — and the more likely you'll be to make a great impression and land the job!