

## Resumes & CVs

Resumes and CVs are essentially marketing tools. They showcase your skills, experiences and accomplishments to potential employers, ideally in a way that appeals to your target employers. The purpose of these documents is not to land a job; you are simply trying to pique the employer's interest so that they will invite you in for an interview.

### Key Differences

#### Converting Your CV to a Resume

#### Section-Specific Formatting & Content Guide

#### CV to Resume Sample Conversion

#### Additional Resources

### Key Differences

Resumes and CVs serve similar functions, but there are a few key differences. The table below provides a general comparison of the two documents. Read on for a more detailed explanation of the differences and guidance for converting your CV to a resume.

	<b>CV</b>	<b>Resume</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	Create a scholarly identity	Create a professional identity
<b>Audience</b>	Academic, International, Research	Corporate, Government & Nonprofit Employers
<b>Length</b>	3-5 pages (for new grads)	1-2 pages
<b>Format</b>	Full titles/ citations; SECTIONS inc. education, courses taught, presentations, publications, service...	Bullet points, sentence fragments; SECTIONS inc. education, work experience, skills & possibly coursework, academic projects & awards
<b>Content</b>	Emphasizes knowledge & final product; <i>what</i> you contributed/ created	Emphasizes skills and process; <i>how</i> you contributed/ created

### Length

As an academic, you most likely have been slotting all your achievements and experiences into a CV that has probably grown to be 3-5 pages long. While collegiate employers may appreciate the detail in a 3+ page CV, employers outside of academia will expect a 1 or 2 page resume.

**Why Less is More** In first round reviews, non-academic employers are primarily focused on reducing the applicant pool to a more manageable number. Employers will, on average, spend about 15-30 seconds reviewing your resume before deciding whether you make the first cut. This means **your fit for the position must be conveyed clearly and quickly**. If your qualifications aren't apparent until page two or your resume lists everything you have done, your relevant skills/ experience may be overshadowed by the extraneous info.

**Think of your resume as a tightly focused argument** about why you are qualified for this specific job. Provide only the details that strengthen your argument i.e. speak to your qualifications and fit for *this* position at *this* organization.

**Develop a one-page resume.** This demonstrates your ability to extract relevant information from your repertoire and concisely conveys the value of your skills/ experience relevant to a specific job.

### Format

Formatting impacts that essential first impression. That said, there is no such thing as the "best" or "correct" way to format your resume. Recruiters have different preferences and resume experts will offer varying opinions. To a certain degree, formatting is a matter of personal choice. Adherence to these best practices will make it easier for employers to identify your qualifications in that first 15-30 second scan.

Organize logically & hierarchically.

- Logically - similar experiences grouped into the same section
- Hierarchically - most relevant section at the top

- Reverse chronological order within each section → most recent/ current role first

Use simple, **consistent** formatting.

- No fancy borders, bullets, fonts, images or colors.
- Similar elements should be aligned, spaced and formatted identically.
  - Ex. All SECTION TITLES in Cambria, 12pt, all caps, aligned with left margin

Use bold, italicized, or all capitalized font to draw attention to key elements.

- 10-12 pt font; Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana, Garamond or Calibri
  - Ex. Italicize *Job titles*, Bold **Employer Name**; all other in regular font

Use bullet points, active verbs & “gapping” language to explain what each job or experience entailed. Ex. Skills utilized/ developed, tasks managed, accomplishments...

- Use sentence fragments; No paragraphs or first-person pronouns.
- Omitting connecting words (a, the, my...) is acceptable as long as point is clear

Create a “Skills” Section

- Typically the last section on the page
- Highlights computer, language & research/ data analysis skills

## Content

You’ve spent years speaking the language of academia and of your discipline but now you have to learn how to talk about your strengths and experiences in a way that resonates with employers outside of academia. This can be one of the most challenging aspects of transitioning to a career outside of academia. Developing your resume content will involve multiple drafts and your “final draft” will ultimately require many different alterations to fit each position you pursue.

For graduate students, creating a one-page resume often means cutting aspects of your research that you find intriguing and academic accomplishments are (rightly) a source of great pride. Keep in mind, “It’s not about you. It’s about the job.”<sup>1</sup> These details may be impressive to an academic audience, but they are often of limited value in helping non-academic employers determine how you would perform in the position under consideration.

**The difference between *almost* the right word and the right word is really a large matter - it’s the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.” - Mark Twain**

## Converting Your CV to a Resume

The diversity of grad student experiences and interests prohibit any “one size fits all” tutorial for crafting resume content, but the strategies and examples detailed below will help you make the most of that one page.

**Start with the 3 C’s - Cut, Create and Consult - (detailed below) then use our section-specific formatting guidelines to complete your CV to resume conversion.**

### Make the First Cut

Cut these sections from your CV:

- Presentations
- Lists of Courses Taught or Taken
- Academic Awards
- Thesis/ Dissertation Topic
- Publications
- Scholarships

- References

### Create New Content

Nonacademic employers need more than just a list of job/ course/ project titles to determine fit for the position/ organization. You need to create bullet points that explain what you did in each role, what skills you utilized or developed, or how you contributed to positive outcomes. The goal is to help employers visualize you in your previous roles AND in the role you are seeking. Admittedly, this is not an easy goal to accomplish, but these strategies will give you a solid **START**.

Shift your focus from *product* to *process*

Translate academic language into more generalizable terms.

Aim for a balance of depth and breadth

Review, rephrase and reorganize

Tailor your resume for each position

**Shift your focus from *product* → *process*; from *topics* → *actions*.**

Instead of describing *what* you taught/ researched/ etc. explain *how* you managed these tasks.

- Ex. Utilized X, Y, Z to (achieve \_\_\_\_ objective or outcome)
- For teaching - What techniques/ tools/ software did you use?
  - Ex. Demonstrated \_\_\_, designed activities, provided individualized feedback
- For research - How did you collect and analyze data? present findings?

**Translate academic language into more generalizable/ business terminology**

For Teaching Roles

- Teach → Train, Coach, Mentor
- Courses → Educational or Training Programs
- Class or student(s) → group

For Research Roles

- Lit Review = Background research
- Concepts or Theories → Best practices, Perspectives, Models...( will vary by topic)
- Professor (Ex. - Provide research and/or administrative support for \_\_\_\_\_)
  - For a research position → Principal Investigator or Lead Researcher
  - For a non-research position → Supervisor or Project Manager

**Aim for depth in relevant skills/ areas and breadth of transferrable skills**

*Relevant Experience* Look to the job posting for cues as to what skills/ experience are most relevant to a given position. *Tip:* As you read the posting, highlight key details & required skills/ areas of expertise. **IMPORTANT:** Build this section up as much as possible.

- Qualifications listed first are generally of a higher priority
- “Required” experiences
  - These are crucial if you want to make the first cut
  - Must be apparent, easy to find
- “Preferred” experiences
  - Prime opportunity to gain a competitive edge

*Transferrable Skills* These are skills that are utilized in a broad range of occupations/ industries and positions from entry-level to executive. For example, “Explained policies and procedures to....”; “explaining” is a transferrable skill; many jobs will require you to explain some type of form, policy or procedure either to customers, clients or to people

you are training or supervising.

Here is a brief list to help you better understand what we mean by transferrable skills. For more guidance on this topic click here → **Identifying your Strengths and Transferrable Skills**

- Communication - writing, presenting, explaining...
- Organization - of information, materials or people
- Leadership/ Management - of a project, course or event
- Teamwork - Consider action verbs like collaborate, contribute & co-author/ chair
- Research and data analysis - Remember to emphasize process not titles or topics

**Review and Reflect.** Review to identify errors and extraneous information. Reflect to identify areas for improvement.

- Is this the most effective presentation of your skills, talents, experience?
- Does this demonstrate your ability to fulfill the requirements of the job?
- Does this pique the reader's interest? Encourage them to want to know more?

**Tailor your resume for each position:** Put yourself in the employer's shoes → Connect your experiences to their needs. Use keywords and strategic section titles.

**Keywords** Use terminology from the job posting and the industry/ field you are targeting. *Tip:* If you don't know the industry terminology, reference a 101-level textbook from the field.

**Strategic section headings** Replace generic section titles with more informative/ appealing section titles

- Ex. "Work Experience" → "Research Experience", "Training Experience"
- Ex. "Activities" → Leadership Experience, Campus & Community Involvement

*Consult* a Career Coach or another post-academic *from outside your program*. An individual who is fluent in the language of academia and the language of your target employers - can help you:

- Determine where you need to use more generic, nonacademic terms
- Describe experiences in a way that more effectively appeals to nonacademic employers
- Identify additional aspects of your experience that will strengthen your resume

## Section-Specific Formatting & Content Guide

### Heading

- Name - bolded, possibly in a slightly bigger font size like 14pt.
- Provide address, email, phone, LinkedIn profile URL

### Education

- Typically at the top of the page, directly under the heading.
- Include Degree, Field/ Major, Institution, Date/ Expected date of graduation, GPA
  - Write out The University of Texas at Austin
  - Remove all high school and transfer college information
  - Include relevant training, workshops, continuing education, certifications, licenses, etc.

### Research & Other Scholarly Work

- Use general terms for research and publications
- Emphasize your process and broadly-valued transferrable skills
- *Tip:* Instead of detailing individual courses/ projects, consider combining and summarizing the most relevant elements of your coursework and research projects under your grad student role. This concisely conveys the value of your academic experiences and leaves space for other work experience, leadership and volunteer roles.

The University of Texas at Austin  
*Researcher / PhD Student*

8/12 -

- *Conduct independent research: design surveys, collect, clean and analyze data*
- *Analyze quantitative & qualitative research related to \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Explain research findings and implications orally and in writing*
- *Create visual representations of data to enhance listener comprehension & retention*
- *Collaborate with top scholars & faculty on research projects and case studies*

#### Teaching

- Do not divide/ organize according to classes taught
- Use 3-5 bullet points highlighting relevant achievements and transferrable skills

#### Professional Experience

IMPORTANT—build up as much as possible!

Non-academic work experiences are will likely be more highly regarded by resume readers

- Might include: jobs, internships, service to the department/ discipline, leadership and volunteer roles, freelance work and entrepreneurial efforts
- Include organization name, role, location, and start/ end dates (include months and years)

#### Honors & Awards

Scholarships and awards based on academic achievements don't tell the employer anything that they can't garner from your GPA and advanced degree. Cut your list down to honors/ awards that speak to a skillset Ex. Awards for teaching or for an essay, research project or presentation.

- List award name and date. Omit the full title/ details of your project
  - Ex. Won Top Paper Award at National Association of \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Conference

#### Skills

- Generally at the bottom of the page - end on a high note]
- Highlight research, computer and language skills
  - Computer: list software, hardware
  - Language: specify level of competency, i.e. intermediate, advanced, working knowledge of, conversational

## CV to Resume Sample Conversion

Here is a sample CV to resume conversion. In this situation a PhD candidate in English wants to convert her CV into a resume for the National Curriculum Specialist position described below.

#### **National Curriculum Specialist**

Marketing | Austin, TX

The National Curriculum Specialist assists with pre-sales curriculum presentations, product demonstrations, sales training and enablement for the nationwide sales force.

#### JOB DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Serves as one of the primary presenters for sales briefings.
- Assists with development of sales tools and internal sales training as needed.
- Serves as a resource to assist account executives and associates with preparations for their own sales presentations.
- Curriculum Specialists will work primarily in their geographic quadrant of the company, but will support other

areas as needed.

SKILLS/COMPETENCIES:

- Must be a self-starter and possess the ability to develop in-depth product knowledge and the communication/interpersonal skills to interface within the organization and all levels of school personnel.
- Skill in the use of presentation hardware and software.
- Work independently with a minimum of supervision

EDUCATION / KNOWLEDGE:

- Bachelor’s degree in education or related field is required. Master’s degree in Education or related field is preferred but not required.

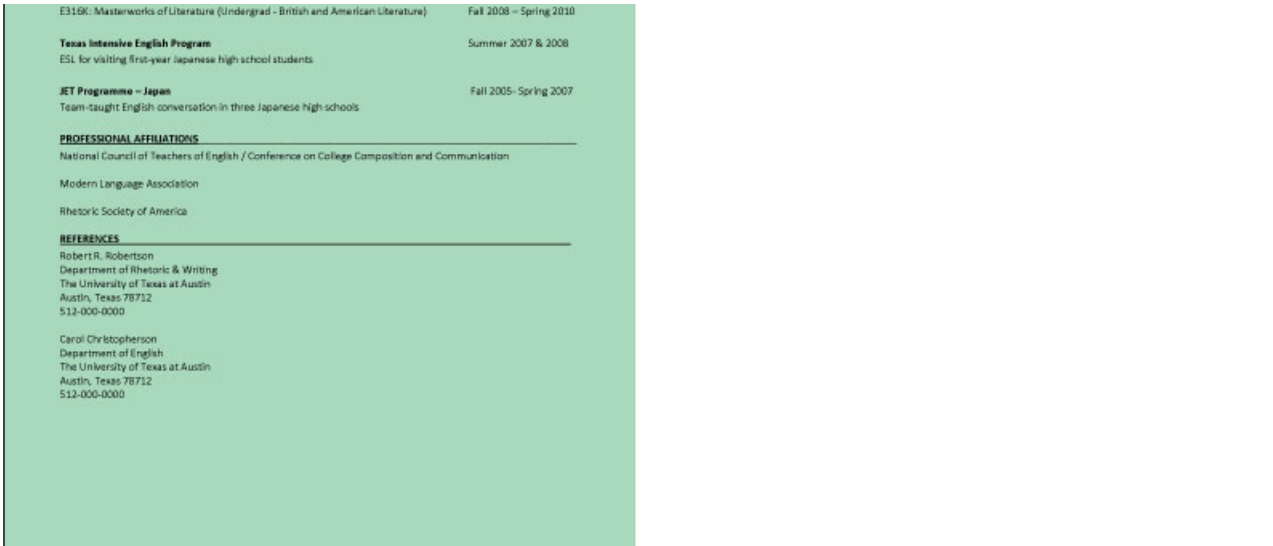
JOB EXPERIENCE:

- Educational experience as a classroom teacher/administrator within a school district
- Must have previous sales or training experience and the ability to present with minimal presentation time.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

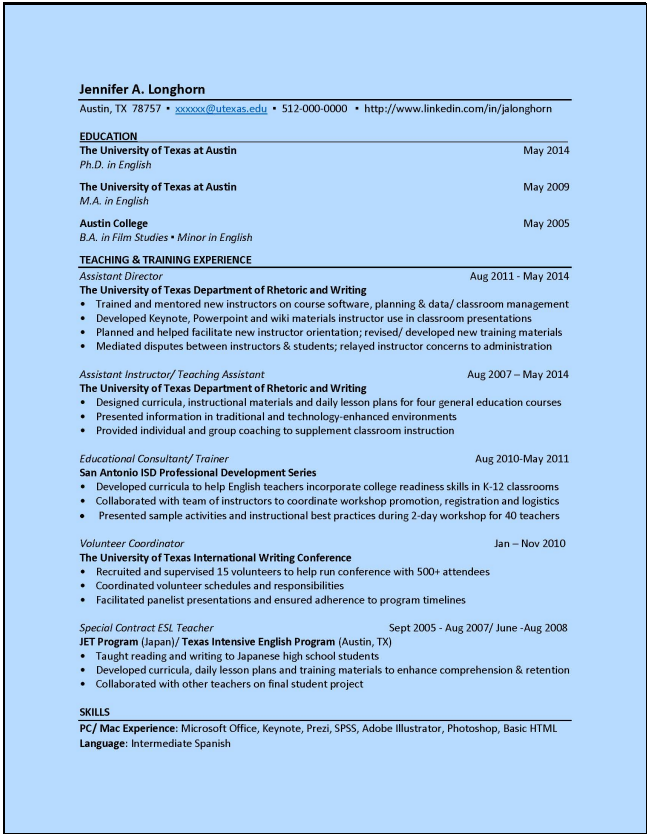
- Extensive travel required

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<div><div>AWARDS</div><div><div>Nominee for Maxine Hairston Award for Teaching Excellence, 2013</div><div>Department of Rhetoric and Writing, University of Texas</div></div><div><div>Graduate Student Professional Development Award, 2009, 2010, 2013</div><div>Office of Graduate Studies, University of Texas</div></div></div> <div><div>TEACHING EXPERIENCE</div><div><div><div>The University of Texas at Austin</div><div>RHE 310: Intermediate Expository Prose (https://odmhe310.pbworks.com/)</div><div>Spring 2014 - Present</div></div><div><div>E3144: Literature &amp; Education (Undergrad/ Writing Intensive)</div><div>Spring/ Fall 2013</div></div><div><div>E388T: Supervised Teaching in English (Graduate)</div><div>Spring/ Fall 2012</div></div><div><div>RHE 309K: Rhetoric of Abolition (Undergrad)</div><div>Fall 2011</div></div><div><div>RHE 306: Rhetoric and Writing (Undergrad)</div><div>Fall 2010 – Spring 2011</div></div></div></div>	



To convert this CV into a resume, we:

- CUT presentations and publications, awards, references, courses listed under teaching experience, and professional experience/ service roles that were not immediately relevant to the position
- Minimized academic details to make content more easily understandable & relevant to a nonacademic audience
- INCORPORATED KEYWORDS from the job ad
- HIGHLIGHTED and EXPANDED on RELEVANT EXPERIENCE including curriculum design, presentations, supervisory and organizational responsibilities, collaboration, and teaching diverse populations



Additional Resources

**Writing Effective Resumes and CVs by Katherine Brooks, Ed.D**

LACS page on **resumes and cover letters**

"Why I Tossed Your Resume." - common resume mistakes and how to avoid them. Miller, Brent. "Why I Tossed Your Résumé." The Chronicle of Higher Education 17 Apr. 2012.

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**Notes**

1. Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius, *"So What Are You Going to Do with That?": Finding Careers Outside Academia*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University Of Chicago Press, 2007), 99