

Translating Skills to Industry Job Applications

Presented by

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Graduate Student Professionalization Series

Carnegie Mellon University

AGENDA

- **Icebreaker**
- **Identifying Transferrable Skills**
- **Resumes vs CVs**
- **Components of a Resume**
- **Writing Effective Bullet Points**
- **Tailoring a Resume**
- **Cover Letters**
- **Recruiting Timelines**

ICE BREAKER!

Have you ever considered a career outside of academia (and if so, doing what?)

What is your biggest concern with respect to an industry job search?



What Skills are Employers Seeking – Transferable Skills!

NACE Job Outlook Survey 2021

- Ability to Work on a Team (81%)
- Problem-Solving Skills (79%)
- Analytical/Quantitative Skills (76%)
- Communication Skills, Verbal (73.2%)
- Communication Skills, Written (72.7%)
- Initiative (67.8%)
- Leadership (67.8%)
- Technical Skills (67.8%)
- Flexibility/Adaptability (65.9%)
- Work Ethic (65.4%)
- Computer Skills (59%)
- Interpersonal Skills (57.6%)
- Detail-oriented (56.1%)
- Organizational Ability (39%)
- Creativity (29.8%)
- Strategic Planning Skills (28.3%)
- Friendly/Outgoing Personality (25.9%)
- Entrepreneurial Skills (19.5%)
- Tactfulness (17.6%)
- Fluency in a Foreign Language (3.4%)

In-Demand Skill Sets (NACE, 2020)

- Ability to verbally communicate with persons inside and outside the organization (4.63)
- Ability to work in a team structure (4.62)
- Ability to make decisions and solve problems (4.49)
- Ability to plan, organize, and prioritize work (4.41)
- Ability to obtain and process information (4.34)
- Ability to analyze quantitative data (4.21)
- Technical knowledge related to the job (3.99)
- Proficiency with computer software programs (3.86)
- Ability to create and/or edit written reports (3.60)
- Ability to sell or influence others (3.55)

5-point scale, where 1=Not at all important; 2=Not very important; 3=Somewhat important; 4=Very important; and 5=Extremely important – each number in parenthesis is a weighted average

What Skills do Graduate Students Have?

- Interpretation and analysis
- Abstract reasoning and problem solving
- Research
- Synthesis of ideas, data, or existing literature
- Communication (verbal and written)
- Self-management, initiative, and motivation
- Ability to express complex information clearly, especially if you have teaching and mentoring experience

Tasks vs Skills – Teaching a Course

Tasks

- Prepared syllabus
- Provided course resources
- Prepared lectures and discussions
- Developed multimedia resources
- Delivered lectures
- Evaluated student progress; met with students privately to discuss their progress
- Answered questions, created exams, graded papers

Transferable Skills

- Organize and provide structure
- Plan and coordinate
- Present information to large groups
- Translate complex concepts to new learners in interesting ways
- Manage groups and lead discussions
- Communicate clearly to individual students and large groups
- Manage relationships and act as a mediator

Resume vs. CV

Resume

- Industry focus
- 1-2 Pages
- Highlights key experiences, skills and qualifications & is tailored to field of interest
- May include only “select publications/conferences”
- Does NOT include references

- To be utilized as part of your application process
- To help employers determine if your background meets their requirements

CV

- Academic focus
- 2 Pages or More, grows as your experience does
- Shows a complete history of academic, research and professional experience
- Includes all conferences, publications, etc.
- Includes references

The Bottom Line

A CV is a well-organized catalog of your past work; a resume explains what you actually did to achieve these results and what you are capable of doing in the future!

Key Sections of a Resume

Contact Information ✨

Education ✨

Research/Thesis ✨

Skills ✨

Professional Experience ✨

(Select) Publications and Conference Presentations ✨

Projects ✨

Leadership, Activities, Awards, Honors ✨

Resume Review

- [Graduate Resume Guide](http://cmu.edu/career>students&alumni>writearesume/coverletter>resumes>collegeofengineeringgraduate): cmu.edu/career> students & alumni>write a resume/cover letter> resumes>college of engineering graduate

- Review the “PhD” Template

Firstname M. Lastname
 firstlast@andrew.cmu.edu ♦ (412)555-5555 ♦ www.linkedin.com/firstlast

EDUCATION

University Name	Location (City, State)
Doctor of Philosophy in (Degree Program)	Anticipated Date
Thesis: (State the title of your Thesis)	
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0)	

University Name	Location (City, State)
Master of (Degree Program)	Graduation Date (Month Year)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0, 8.0/10)	
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]	

University Name	Location
Bachelor of (Degree Program)- Major	Graduation Date (Month Year)
GPA: XX/Scale (i.e. 3.5/4.0)	
Selected Coursework: [Optional- list only the coursework that is most relevant to your job search 3-6 classes]	

SKILLS

Category 1: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Category 2: [List only skills in which you are proficient]
Languages: [Optional- list spoken languages multiple proficiencies exist. i.e.: English (Fluent), Hindi (Native Speaker)]

THESIS

University Name	Location
Thesis Title	Duration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result 	

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Company A	Location
Job Title	Duration (Month -Month Year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result 	
Company B	Location
Job Title	Duration (Month -Month Year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result 	

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Organization	Location
Project Title and/or Research Position Title	Duration (Month -Month Year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result 	
Organization	Location
Project Title and/or Research Position Title	Duration (Month -Month Year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result 	

CONFERENCES

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Presentation/Speech." Name of the meeting and organization, Location (City, State OR City, Country), Day Month Year (i.e. 12 May 2015). Descriptor of Presentation (i.e.Keynote Address, Conference Presentation, etc.).

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Presentation/Speech." Name of the meeting and organization, Location (City, State OR City, Country), Day Month Year (i.e. 12 May 2015). Descriptor of Presentation (i.e.Keynote Address, Conference Presentation, etc.).

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Last Name, First Name. "Title of Presentation/Speech." Name of the meeting and organization, Location (City, State OR City, Country), Day Month Year (i.e. 12 May 2015). Descriptor of Presentation (i.e.Keynote Address, Conference Presentation, etc.).

PUBLICATIONS

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published]

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published]

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published]

Author(s). "Title of Article." *Title of Journal* Volume.Issue (Year): pages. Medium of publication. [note submitted, under review, etc. if not yet published]

PATENTS

[Last name, first name of the inventor.] [The year the patent was filed.] [The title of the invention.] [Country Patent Application number,] filed [Month Date, Year.] Patent Pending.

[Last name, first name of the inventor.] [The year the patent was issued.] [The title of the invention.] [Country Patent number,] filed [Month Date, Year,] and issued [Month Date, Year.]

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

[List items like Teaching Assistant Positions, Grader roles, etc. here]

University	Location
Title/Role	Duration (Month -Month Year)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verb + Context (what you did and how you did it) + Result 	

LEADERSHIP

Title, Organization Name- Location	Duration
Title, Organization Name- Location	Duration
Title, Organization Name- Location	Duration

AWARDS and HONORS

Name of Award	Date Received (Month Year)
Name of Award	Date Received (Month Year)
Name of Award	Date Received (Month Year)

VOLUNTEER WORK

Position, Organization- Location	Duration
Position, Organization- Location	Duration

Resume Development—Matching Skills and Experiences to your Job Search

Identify Job Interest Areas

Find Representative Jobs
Determine if you meet the education and experience required



Evaluate Your Match---Do you meet the majority of requirements?

Technical Skills Type of Experience Transferable Skills Subject Knowledge



Evaluate Your Resume

Identify projects/experiences and skills to highlight
Tailor your resume to the selected job interest area

Do you have multiple job interest areas?

- Evaluate
- Determine if Resume versions are needed

Crafting a Resume Bullet

Easy Formula: Verb + Context (what / how) + Result

- The *context* describes **what** you did and **how** you did it
- The *result* describes the achievement, outcome, or impact of your work. Without a result, it is difficult to assess your work.

-
- Whenever possible, it is best to quantify your results; however, you may not be able to do so in all cases.
 - At a minimum, you should describe the outcome, impact, or implication of your work, if you are unable to quantify the achievement.
 - Describe your experience and results using action-oriented statements.
 - Use “Active Voice” and avoid “Passive Voice” statements.

Writing a Strong Bullet Point

To create variety and explain the “how” as well as focusing on results you can also try this formula:

- **Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y], by doing [Z]**
 - Key words: from, by, to (alone or in combination)

For example: Increased accuracy from 85% to 95% by developing a new _____, using _____ (skill, tool, process, etc.)

Sample Description – TA'ing a Course

CMU Psychology Department, *Teaching Assistant*, Pittsburgh, PA

- **Created and delivered lectures on cognitive and behavioral psychology twice a week to 50 underclassmen; provided foundational knowledge and taught scientific methods**
- **Translated topics to students using a variety of multimedia sources, including a course-specific website and videos**
- **Developed exams and paper topics; provided feedback on students' communication skills and assignments (both quantitative and qualitative)**

Sample Description – Research

- Collaborated with two postdocs and three graduate students to ensure successful and timely project completion
- Managed and mentored two undergraduate researchers
- Designed, revised, and improved lab protocol throughout research
- Published research articles on X in two peer-reviewed scholarly journals
- Presented research at a symposium lecture with over 300 attendees

Sample Description – Dissertation

CMU Social and Decision Sciences Department, *Dissertation: International Policy and its Effects on Political Economy*

- Located and assembled data on international policies and associated financial and political-economic variables
- Standardized data from multiple sources; organized data in a Microsoft Access database
- Designed a survey using Qualtrics; administered it to 9,000 government officials with over 1,000 respondents
- Analyzed data using multivariate statistical techniques
- Presented findings at the International Society for Political Economy

Headings – Make them work for you!

Instead of generic headings like “Work Experience” or “Related Experience,” use specific headings that grab the reader’s attention:

- **Education and Consulting Experience**
- **Policy, Advocacy, and Research Experience**
- **Teaching and Program Management Experience**
- **Research Experience in Neuroscience and Data Analysis**
- **Software Development and Coding Experience**
- **Research and Writing Experience**

Publications and Presentations

Instead of listing all publications and presentations, consider the following:

- Published four articles on human rights in peer-reviewed journals; presented research to international experts at six conferences
- Contributed to research on new approaches for treating neurological diseases; published results in three peer reviewed journals (*The Lancet*, *NEJM*, and *AJM*)

Skills Section

Consider the following examples of areas of expertise:

- Original Research and Literature Reviews
- Team Management and Supervision
- Teaching, Educating, Training
- Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis
- Survey, Observational, Interview, and Direct Assessment Research Methods
- Program Evaluation

Also include specific software, tools, programs and languages

Optional: Summary / Objective

Why include an Objective/Summary?

- To explain/ give context to a diverse or varied background
- To focus your resume and provide clarity to an employer about your related skills and the value you can add to the organization

Content

- Describe the career path that you are pursuing
- Describe your skills and/or qualifications that align to the field, company and/or position

Tips

- Avoid broad/generalized statements
- Avoid listing several fields or positions
- Remove if the objective/summary isn't adding clarity/value
- Keep it short and concise

Common Resume Mistakes

- Using a non-professional email address (splashypants@gmail.com) instead of your andrew address – CMU is impressive!
- Using the words “Phone” or “Email address” (unnecessary) or including more than one phone number or email (confusing)
- Including marital status, age, or a picture (for jobs in the US)
- Using bland or generic verbs to convey your skills
- Using the present tense for work done in the past (using *lead* instead of *led*); using the present continuous tense instead of the present perfect tense for current work (using *leading* instead of *led*)

Common Resume Mistakes

- Using the first person (“I manage three undergraduates”)
- Using jargon or technical terms that only someone in your field would understand (ask a friend or a relative for a reality check!)
- Using unfriendly formatting (fun fonts, small fonts, large blocks of text)
- Submitting your resume as a Word file – ALWAYS USE PDF
- Forgetting to proofread, proofread, proofread – not just spell-check

Cover Letters – Fun Facts

- Will anyone read it? Answers range from “Never” to “Most important piece of application.”
- Cover letters are required **61%** of the time in online applications
- **83% of recruiters** say that cover letters are important for hiring decisions
- When the letter is optional, **77% of recruiters** gave preference to candidates that included one
- **83% of recruiters** claim that a great cover letter can secure you an interview even if your resume isn't good enough

The Purpose of a Cover Letter

- Introduce yourself as a candidate for a job/internship opportunity
 - May be required, optional or not needed
- One-page that demonstrates how you will utilize your past and present qualifications for the future
- Demonstrate what makes you uniquely qualified for a position- focusing on the qualifications that you possess that align to the position:
 - Skills
 - Professional experience
 - Research experience – particularly thesis
 - Academic projects
 - Extracurricular/Volunteer experience
- Do not provide a summary of your experience/resume. “Show, don’t tell.”
- Review cover letter samples and guides by school/college here: <https://www.cmu.edu/career/students-and-alumni/write-a-resume-or-cover-letter/index.html>

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Cover Letters – From Good to Great

- **Address actual recruiter/hiring manager by name**
- **Research company** and use language that reflects how it describes itself and its mission
- **If you have time -try to speak with current or former employees before applying to inform what you write**
- **Cite conversations** with current or former employees
- **Use your personal background/story to show that you know and value your customer; you share value, passion for this industry. “I want this, I can do this, this matters to me. It’s connected to my bigger WHY.”**

Cover Letters – From Good to Great

- Pick things from your resume to highlight and give context to these experiences. What approach specifically did you take to make that happen? What is it about the way you collaborate with others, your skillset, that allowed this accomplishment to happen? What was the decision making process? Were there any significant challenges or roadblocks, and how did you overcome them? What about personality, passion, work ethic made you especially good at getting this job done?
- Never apologize for missing/lacking experience. Every sentence matters - don't draw attention to things you don't have! Lead with your strengths. My experience in X,Y, Z allows me to _____.

Generic Cover Letter Template

Paragraph 1

- Introduction and Position to which you're applying
- Specific reason(s) for interest in company
- Conversations with current/past employees

Paragraph 2

- Example using competency A (research)
- Relate example back to company

Paragraph 3

- Example using competency B (* non-research)
- Relate example to different aspect of company

Paragraph 4

- Reiterate interest/fit for company (using Info from website, publications, media, social media)
- Thank you sentence -Look forward to interview

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-success/other-resources/handouts/comm-supp-pdfs/writing-cover-letters.pdf>

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Search Timing

INTERNSHIPS

- Timelines can be industry or program specific– Generally, active search occurs within the academic year preceding the summer in which you will complete the internship---begins as early as August prior to the May/June internship start.
- Plan to attend Career Fairs, apply to internships as they become available, network, etc. UNTIL you accept an internship opportunity

JOB

- Timelines can be industry or program specific. Active search typically occurs within the academic year in which you are completing your degree ~6-9 mos from defense
- Pay attention to availability information on job postings:
 - Graduation date requirements
 - The phrase “immediate need” or similar
 - Focus on applying to positions that have been recently posted

QUESTIONS?

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Schedule Appointments through Handshake – In person and Virtual options are available

CPDC is located in the West Wing, 2nd Floor

Carnegie Mellon University

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