

GUIDE TO WRITING

# exceptional resumes

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ONLINE INTERACTIVE BOOK 



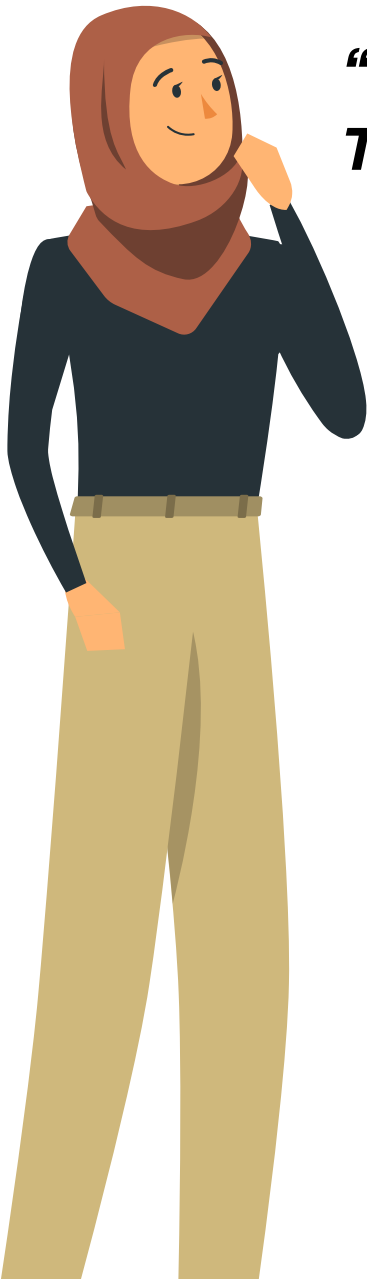
Denver

LYNXCONNECT

INTERNSHIPS  
STUDY ABROAD  
RESEARCH  
CAREER SERVICES

# myth

***“I just need to work on my resume.  
Then I can apply for jobs.”***



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What if you're applying for several different types of jobs?

Would you send the same resume to all those jobs?

# truth

Finding job descriptions first enables you to write a tailored and relevant resume.

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What helps is to first consider what you would like to do **IN** the job, and using that to search for jobs.



# IF YOU **DO** HAVE A JOB DESCRIPTION

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**Print out two job descriptions that sound the *most* interesting and highlight all action verbs you see. What are the top 3 verbs? EX: *Collaborating***

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Now consider – when has there been a time you’ve carried out that verb?**

*EX: In this school project, I collaborated with an outside organization.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# IF YOU *DON'T* HAVE A JOB DESCRIPTION

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If you don't have any ideas, we recommend making an appointment with a career counselor to explore what you would like to do. If you have some ideas, consider jobs you've found interesting. What top 3 skills do you see employees using? Think action verbs. *EX: Talking to customers*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Now consider – when has there been a time you've done this?**

*EX: I always meet and talk to whomever I sit next to in class.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now you're viewing your experience through the lens of the job you're applying for.

**turn the page** to learn how to apply this to your resume!

# STEP 1: RELEVANCY

## myth

*“I need to list absolutely everything I have done on my resume.”*



## truth

**Consider your most relevant experiences and figure out how to make those stand out.**

Employers will pick up in a matter of seconds if your resume is not relevant to what they are looking for.

Imagine you are hiring for the job description below:

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### Summer Intern - Music & Soundtracks, Studio

Exciting opportunity for a student passionate about learning the intersection of films and music. They will work from script development through soundtrack release, researching public domains, updating contact/music databases, read scripts and perform music spotting.

#### Basic Qualifications:

- Passion for music and film; familiarity with music terminology
- Detail oriented, positive and dynamic self-starter who loves solving technical and creative problems.
- Experience with Filemaker pro, Pro Tools, MS Office
- Basic understanding of production processes (both audio, video and film post)
- Currently pursuing a Bachelor’s in Music, Film or related degree.

1

Since this is at the top of the page, this section will most likely be read. Notice how Isabella addressed specific qualifications in each bullet point.

2

All programs and software listed on the job description are first in this list.

3

Your academic classwork counts! Don’t belittle what projects you have done or classes you have taken.

4

Notice how Isabella chose projects directly related to the internship – research, audio, and film. She may have done other projects, but these are the most relevant.

# ISABELLA'S RESUME

## Isabella Martinez

Summer Internship – Music & Soundtracks, Studio

Imartinez@gmail.com  
303-556-2250

Denver, CO 80208  
www.BellMartinezfilms.com

### 1 Profile

- Created five 20-minute documentary films, including script development, shooting, and post editing.
- Solved technical and creative problems related to music and film production.
- 12+ years of classical training in piano and voice, with a strong knowledge of music terminology.

2 **Technical Skills:** Pro Tools, Filemaker Pro, Final Cut Pro, Avid, Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator

### 3 Education

University of Colorado Denver, Denver, CO

Anticipated 05/20xx

**Bachelor of Fine Arts, Music, Recording Arts**

GPA 3.75/4.0

**Minor: Film & Television Production**

### 4 Related Courses

- Audio Production I & II
- Music Law
- Film Post Production III & IIII
- Graphics I & II
- Video Production
- The Film/Video Business

### 5 Relevant Academic Projects

#### Sony Research

- Researched Sony Music Studios' environments to enhance artists experience and client creativity.
- Composed report on utilization of professional outboard gear and large format consoles.

#### Audio Production

- Completed a team project with 4 other students on recording soundboards, basic maintenance of recording equipment, and other electronic music equipment.
- Presented recordings to professor and 20 students utilizing public speaking and communication skills.

#### Film and Editing

- Filmed and edited a 6-part series of 10-minute comedies enhancing knowledge of production process, including scouting locations, casting, script writing, directing, and post-production via Final Cut Pro.

### 6 Relevant Experience

**Nitro Records**, Centennial, CO

01/20xx-Present

#### Street Team Representative

- Proposed upcoming concerts/events and new releases for Denver Metro area to Vice President and Assistant Vice President of Nitro Records.
- Compiled spreadsheets and inventory logs of weekly concert revenue using Filemaker Pro.

**CU Denver College of Arts & Media**, Denver, CO

08/20xx-12/20xx

#### Student Office Staff

- Supported and assisted with general office duties in a fast-paced environment, including customer service in person and on phone, photocopying, filing and project management using Microsoft Office.
- Maintained and managed arts & media equipment, including cameras, camcorders, and recording devices to ensure the safety of up to 200 pieces of professional equipment.

### Additional Experience

P.F. Chang's, Denver, CO

Wait Staff

05/20xx-Present

Macy's, Broomfield, CO

Sales Associate

03/20xx-04/20xx

### Professional Organizations

American Society of Audio Engineers

Member

08/20xx-Present

What did Isabella do to show how her experience is **relevant**?

What are some ideas you can take from Isabella?

When you're considering an experience/award/academic project/etc., ask yourself:

**Is this experience relevant to the job I'm applying for?**

If the answer is **NO**

you don't *have* to put it on your resume

OR it could go closer to the bottom of the page

If the answer is **YES**

**HOW** relevant is it to your job?

This gives you an idea where on the page it could go (**top 1/3** = most relevant!)

5

By placing her related coursework and academic projects above her experience, Isabella made the top of her resume very relevant to the internship.

Note how she also split her job experiences. You are not locked into having a long list of job experience. Isabella considered relevancy, and decided this was the best way to showcase relevant experience.

6

Isabella decided not to put bullet points, showing it isn't as relevant. However, the experience still matters and quickly shows customer service skills.

## STEP 2: SCANNABILITY

### myth

***“Employers will spend time reading through my resume.”***



### truth

**Employers may spend 10-15 SECONDS when first looking through your resume.**

This is why the top part of your resume is most likely to be read and it's necessary for your resume to be scannable.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### **Research Assistant in Data Analysis for on-campus Pharmacogenomics Project**

Student will work in a small research group; search databases for genomic markers that explain adverse drug reactions. The student will gain knowledge of pharmacogenomics, database management, protein active site modeling, and drug design concepts. The student will improve their skills of literature searching, organizing and presenting data, and oral communication skills.

#### **Minimum Qualifications:**

- Self-motivated and ability to work independently
- General Chemistry coursework (high school ok)
- Programming experience a plus.
- Available 10-20 hours/week

1

The necessity of an objective is usually field dependent.

2

While bullet points may have been easier to scan, Frank did a good job of keeping it short and relevant. The programming list also breaks up the paragraph and gives something for the eye to latch on to.

3

Placing dates on the right side spreads out the information, making it easy to see quickly while scanning.



# FRANK'S RESUME

Now, set a 15 second timer and scan this resume:

## FRANK GO

FrancisGo@gmail.com  
303-556-2250

Denver, CO 80002

### OBJECTIVE

Seeking an on-campus, research assistant position

### SKILLS

Self-motivated individual with ability to work independently, shown by self-education of a variety of programming languages (C++, Javascript, HTML). Demonstrated ability to work as a cooperative team member as shown by active academic leadership involvement. Deeply committed to professional and academic excellence.

### EDUCATION

#### Major: Undeclared in College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

University of Colorado Denver, Denver, CO

*Coursework in-progress: General Chemistry*

#### High School Diploma

Chatfield High School, Littleton, CO

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Denver Hospital, Denver, CO

Sept. 20xx – Present

Stress Disorder Volunteer

- Aid 14 nurses in creating comfortable environment for patients and family by maintaining a friendly, positive attitude
- Apply motivational therapy techniques successfully with the help of 4 to 8 hospital staff to instill hope in individuals and positive self-imagining in a weekly Stress Reduction Program

### WORK EXPERIENCE

Macaroni Grill, Denver, CO

Sept. 20xx – Present

Server/Trainer

- Communicate with server/host team of 6 to best serve customers in an efficient way
- Deliver exceptional customer service in a fast-paced dining establishment, serving about 150 customers per 8 hours

Black Rocket, Thorton, CO

June 20xx

Lead Instructor (*Seasonal*)

- Taught programming and coding to class of 12 kids, aged 10-12 for a 4-week session
- Organized lesson plans and presented hour long, hands-on lessons to class, improving oral communication skills

### LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

President, DECA

April 20xx

- Received 1<sup>st</sup> Place in Regional Marketing Competition

Vice President, Student Council

Nov. 20xx

- Re-drafted Student Handbook in MS Word consisting of 130 pages

### HONORS & AWARDS

Recipient, Boettcher Scholarship

Aug. 20xx – May 20xx

1<sup>st</sup> Place for Extemporaneous Speaking, National Forensic Competition

Jan. 20xx

National Deans List, Chatfield High School

Jan. 20xx

Scan your own resume for 10-15 seconds.

Did your eye get stuck anywhere?

Did you read words and phrases that were relevant to the job description?

If NOT

What changes can you make?

4

If Frank had chosen to bold this, it would have competed with the other bold phrases. Italics is subtle but noticeable.

5

Remove this section after your first year of college.

6

Frank listed "programming" first instead of "coding" since this is the word used in the job description.

7

How many words and phrases here are from the job description?

# STEP 3: BULLET POINTS

## myth

*“I need to list out the job duties I did at previous jobs for my bullet points.”*



## truth

**Using the job description’s action verbs and giving results to your actions will be more impactful.**

## JOB DESCRIPTION

### Child and Youth Specialist

Work directly with children and family to ensure appropriate services are provided to children amidst transition out of short-term housing into permanent housing. You will provide direct services to children and youth and collaborate with school systems, mental health agencies, and community partners to ensure the needs are met.

#### Qualifications:

- Bachelor’s degree in any field and 1-2 years of experience with homeless services programs or human services.
- Ability to work effectively in collaboration with diverse groups of people; bilingual proficiency beneficial.
- Demonstrate empathy when responding to participants needs and requests.
- Use practices including trauma informed care, and de-escalation/conflict resolution techniques.
- Experience with Microsoft Word and Excel

1

Bullet points under a summary or profile are more of a descriptor, with adjectives describing you. Note that Linh pulled relevant verbs from the job description.

2

Linh originally wanted to go into the medical field and thought she had to study biology. As she learned about the medical field, she realized the way she wanted to impact people was different. Still wanting to keep her Biology major, she supplemented with internship, work, and volunteer experience focused how she was interested in impacting people. Through these hands-on experiences, she learned a lot about herself, helping her be more specific as she searched for full-time jobs.

# LINH'S RESUME

## LINH NGUYEN

303-555-2250 | Linh.Nguyen@ucdenver.edu | www.Linkedin.com/NguyenL

### SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Obtain Child & Youth Specialist that leverages 2+ years of experience working in homeless shelters, crisis hotlines and mentoring youth, developing sense of empathy and experience in trauma-informed care
- Effective communicator and collaborator with diverse groups of people; bilingual in English and Spanish
- Detail-oriented with excellent analytical, communication, and organizational skills as evident through internship and academic experiences
- Technical skills include Microsoft Excel, Word, PowerPoint

### EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER, Denver, CO Expected 05/20xx  
**Bachelor of Science, Biology**  
GPA: 3.76

#### Relevant Projects

- Trauma Research Project** May 20xx
- Researched effects childhood trauma has on brain development and biological stress systems
  - Presented findings at campus wide undergraduate research symposium; received People's Choice Award
- Safe House Research** Aug. 20xx
- Conducted 5 informational interviews with local safe houses, learning difficulties of navigating system
  - Developed and wrote proposal of streamlining system based on informational interviews

### EXPERIENCE

**Education Support Intern**  
GROWHAUS, Denver, CO 09/20xx-12/20xx

- Collaborated with 6 local schools to provide food education during weekly school visits and presentations
- Promoted, planned, executed, and evaluated age-appropriate, bilingual curricula to create impactful experiences for participants experiencing food insecurities; participants ranged from children to adults
- Maintained care of plants and animals to aid continual vegetable growth

**Bilingual Crisis Advocate**  
LATINA SAFEHOUSE, INC, Denver, CO 01/20xx-08/20xx

- Provided trauma-informed, survivor-centered, bilingual advocacy to immigrant women, creating a safe space while ensuring needs were met
- Connected with caseload of 15 families through rapport-building, empathy and listening, linking them to appropriate services and emergency support
- Completed 40-hour community based domestic violence program, increasing advocacy skills

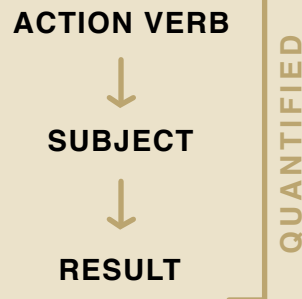
**Barista**  
STARBUCKS, INC, Denver, CO 06/20xx-12/20xx

- Maintained accuracy and professionalism while serving up to 15 customer orders per shift.
- Awarded employee of the Month 4 times.

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

HOPE HOUSE **Mentoring Volunteer** May 20xx  
SACRED HEART HOUSE OF DENVER **Living Skills Class Volunteer** Aug. 20xx  
DENVER RESCUE MISSION **Volunteer** Aug. 20xx

**flip back** to the first action verb and related story you wrote out in the beginning. Use these stories and this bullet point formula to write some bullet points:



(Action Verb)

(Subject)

(Result of Action Verb & Subject)

**Can any of the above be quantified? If yes, go ahead and add that in.**

3

(Provided) - **ACTION VERB**

(trauma-informed, survivor-centered, bilingual advocacy to immigrant women) - **SUBJECT**

(creating a safe space while ensuring needs were met) - **RESULT**

# GENERAL FORMATTING GUIDELINES

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## VISUAL STYLE

- Resume should be 1-2 pages.
- Set margins to .50”–1”.
- Use only one font throughout the body except in the case of the header.
- Generally, use black text only; be strategic in use of colored fonts.
- Date formats should be consistent: 05/19 or 5/19 or May 2019.
- Be consistent with placement and alignment of dates.
- Use a simple font such as Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman, or Cambria.
- Use a 10–12 point font size generally. 11-point font is recommended for the body.
- Choose from bold, enlarged font, ALL CAPS or Small Caps to make the headings stand out.
- Do not use templates to create your resume.
- Avoid using tables.

## WRITING STYLE

- Be consistent with elements such as periods at the ends of lines.
- Use numerals (1, 2, 3) instead of writing out numbers.
- Be consistent with the format and alignment of bullets.
- Do not use first person pronouns (I, me, my).

## HEADER

- Place your name at the top of the resume in a font size larger than the body text.
- Provide phone number and email address; City and State are optional.
- Add LinkedIn or other URL if updated and relevant.
- Phone numbers and email address don't need to be titled “email” or “phone.”

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Do not list references on the resume. Create a separate document that lists references and their contact information.

*These do not apply to Federal Resumes. For help with Federal Resumes, schedule an appointment.*



# congrats!

YOU'VE MADE SOME GREAT PROGRESS ON YOUR RESUME

At LynxConnect, we're here to support you throughout the employment process!  
Schedule an appointment in **Handshake** to talk with a professional about your resume.

Have some quick questions or would like faster assistance from a peer instead?  
Choose "**LynxConnect - Peer Career Advisor**" in Handshake for appointment options.

## need more help?

CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:

### **CU Denver Career Center**

Tivoli Student Union, Suite 439 | 303-315-4000 | [ucdenver.edu/lynxconnect/career-center](https://ucdenver.edu/lynxconnect/career-center)

### **CU Denver Writing Center**

Corner of 12th St. & Larimer St. (CU Denver) First Floor

(303) 315-7355 | [writing.center@ucdenver.edu](mailto:writing.center@ucdenver.edu) | <https://clas.ucdenver.edu/writing-center/>