

# **CV to Resume: Translating Your Skills for Non-Academic Employers**

Mike Firmand

Assistant Director for Employer Outreach

# Agenda

- What's the Difference: CV vs. Resume
- Resume Structure and Format
- Writing the Resume
- Four Principles

# What's the Difference?

The CV is (typically) for an **academic** audience.

The resume is (typically) for a **general** audience.

The CV is **comprehensive**.

The resume is a **snapshot** of relevant education, skills, & experiences.

The CV is **flexible in length** but **rigid in content**.

The resume is more **rigid in length** but more **flexible in content**.

The CV is a **record**.

The resume is a **response**.

# CV vs. Resume



Presents academic  
accomplishments and  
scholarly potential

As long as needed  
but prioritized

Demonstrates skills  
and experience for  
specific position

Usually one page

# CV vs. Resume

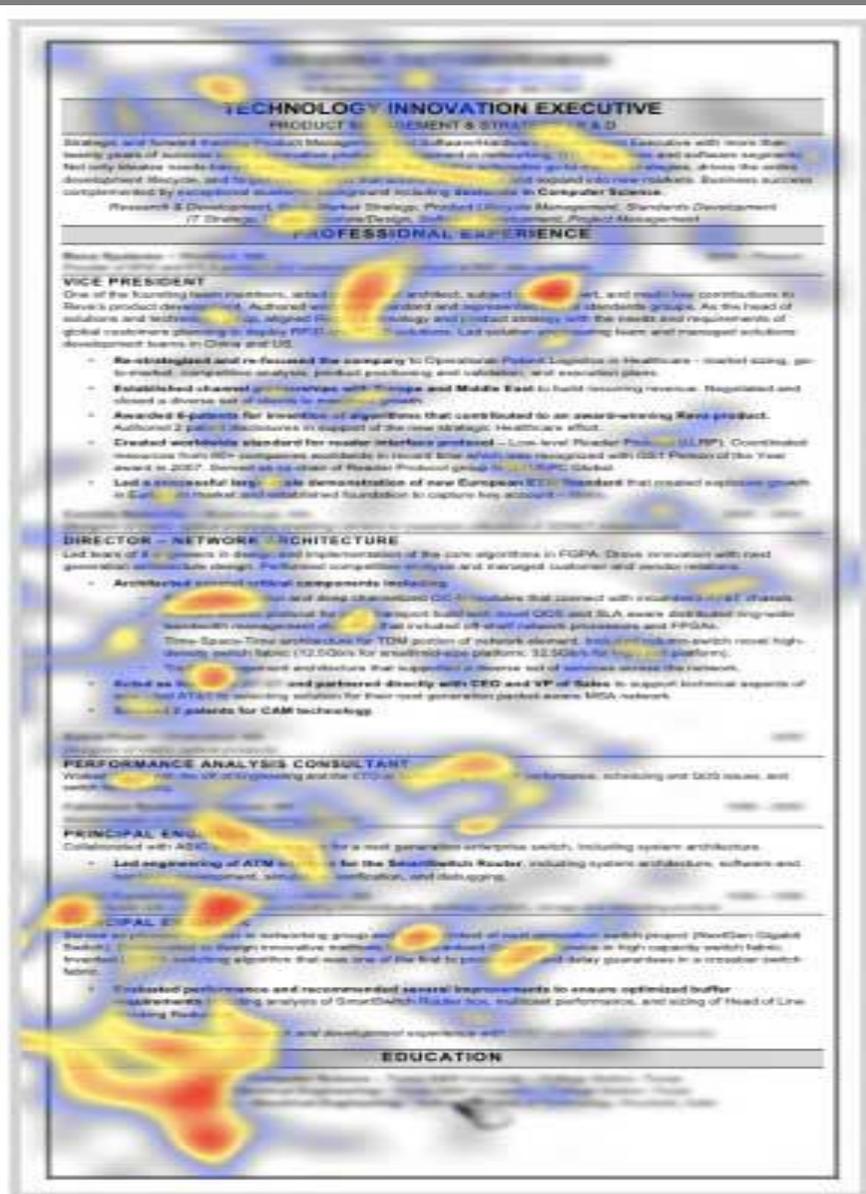
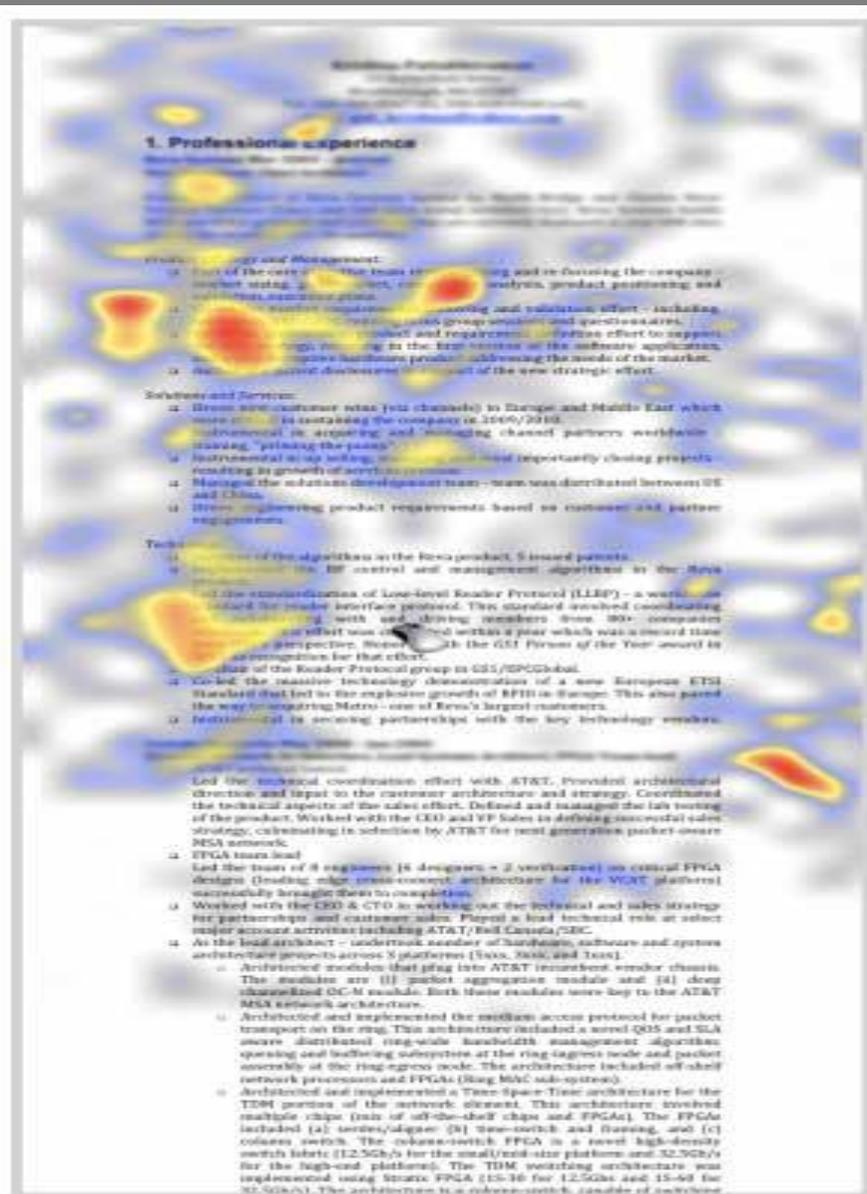


Show how your  
academic/research  
background prepares  
you for a position

Typically 2 pages

# Resume Structure & Format

Make it as easy as possible on your reader to  
**extract information quickly!**



Source: Keeping an Eye on Recruiter Behavior, TheLadders, 2014

## SAMPLE CHRONOLOGICAL RESUME

# Jonathan Michaels

888 W. State St. · Urbana, IL 61801 · (888) 888-8888 · jmstudent@illinois.edu

### EDUCATION

**MS in Environmental Engineering in Civil Engineering** May 20XX  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Concentration: Aquatic Biology & Ecology
- GPA: 3.68/4.00

**BS in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences; BS in Forestry** May 20XX  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Minor: Physics; Concentration: Ecology
- GPA: 3.92/4.00, *summa cum laude*

### EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

**Graduate Research Associate, University of Illinois** May 20XX - present

- Develop new 3D capabilities for ArcView software.
- Create Pocket PC wildlife reporting form with GPS support to be deployed at DFW International Airport.
- Provide GIS mapping support to the testing of a prototype radar designed to detect birds.
- Work and collaborate with a variety of people, including administrators, scientists, engineers, managers, and students.
- Supervised and mentored three undergraduate workers and two interns per semester.

**Undergraduate Research Assistant, University of Illinois** Fall 20XX - May 20XX

- Built GIS products, explained their use and demonstrated their functionality to wildlife managers, administrators, and researchers.
- Integrated, improved, and analyzed large databases using both Excel and R.
- Analyzed conflicts between wildlife and airport operations.
- Presented research to both technical and non-technical audiences.

**Teaching Assistant, Forestry Field Studies, University of Illinois** Summer 20XX

- Demonstrated field work techniques and assisted professors with lessons.
- Explained challenging quantitative and biological concepts to 25 students in an intermediate level course.
- Evaluated homework, tests, and field work and held office hours to ensure students understood course concepts.

**Lab Assistant, University of Illinois** 20XX-20XX

- Synthesized and analyzed a variety of data for three different researchers.
- Performed chemical and ecophysiological experiments using techniques such as flow cytometry.
- Conducted field work examining the influence of CO<sub>2</sub> on insect herbivory patterns.

### RELEVANT SKILLS

- Extensive experience working with PC computers, Macintosh, and GPS
- Adept with MS Project, ArcView 3.x (including 3D Analyst), Visual CE, R, AutoCAD, and SQL
- Skilled in operations and maintaining ArcGIS 10.2, ArcPad, Microsoft Access, basic HTML

# Chronological Resume

- **Pros**

- Highlights progressive work experience.
- Is most traditional and easiest to construct and understand.
- Best for those who have significant experience in the field where they are seeking a job.

- **Cons**

- Less effective if changing careers, have little work experience or need to draw a connection between an experience and a job that seems unrelated.
- Can cause an older but highly relevant experience to get buried at the end.

## SAMPLE MODIFIED CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

### David D. Davidson

dddavidson@gmail.com | (847) 847 - 8478  
333 Street Avenue | Urbana, IL 61801

#### EDUCATION

---

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Illinois)

Master's degree in Biology | GPA: 3.8/4.0

Expected December 20XX

Bachelor's degree in Molecular and Cellular Biology | GPA: 3.9/4.0

May 20XX

#### LABORATORY SKILLS

---

*Cell Biology:* Mammalian Cell Culture, Flow Cytometry, Immunofluorescence

*Molecular Biology:* Calcium Quantification, PCR, DNA Isolation, Restriction Enzyme Analysis, ELISA

*Protein Biology:* Protein Purification, SDS-PAGE, Western Blotting

*Genetics:* Site-Directed Mutagenesis, DNA Cloning, DNA Quantification, Primer Design

*Computer:* R, SPSS, SAS, GraphPad, HTML

#### PROFESSIONAL & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

---

Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Biochemistry, Illinois September 20XX - Present

- Optimized an experimental assay to fluorescently measure calcium efflux during vacuole fusion, thereby providing improved biochemical analysis
- Designed experiments, problem solved issues and analyzed data for future publications
- Supervised several undergraduates by organizing responsibilities, designing and coordinating experiments, and training them in laboratory techniques, instrumentation, procedures, and daily tasks
- Presented data at bi-weekly joint lab meetings and departmental seminars

Project Manager, Illinois Business Consulting, Illinois January 20XX - Present

- Promoted from consultant to project manager and managed interdisciplinary student-consulting team to provide value-added solutions for start-up
- Participated in 5 consulting projects with both start-up and established companies

Teaching Assistant, School of Molecular and Cellular Biology, Illinois Spring 20XX, Fall 20XX

- Instructed undergraduate intermediate biology lab section of ~25 students throughout each week by designing lectures, leading discussions, demonstrating procedures, fielding questions, and grading student lab reports and presentations
- Ranked by students as Outstanding Teacher in top ten percent across campus for 2 semesters

#### LEADERSHIP & VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

---

Vice-President, Biology Registered Student Organization, Illinois January 20XX - Present

- Coordinate recruitment of new members and have grown organization by 25% over the past year
- Facilitate student meetings and provide program support to organization sponsored events

Volunteer, Big Brother/ Big Sister Program, Champaign, IL January 20XX - Present

- Participate in community volunteer events to raise awareness for local office
- Mentor elementary-age children and provide consistent experiences through positive activities

# Modified Chronological Resume

- **Pros**

- Can allow a less recent but highly relevant experience to appear at the top.
- Categories can help draw connections between experiences.

- **Cons:**

- May be difficult to categorize experiences.

## SAMPLE MODIFIED CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

### Emma S. Lee, PhD

emmaslee@gmail.com | (217) 222 - 2222  
222 Road Avenue | Urbana, IL 61801

#### SUMMARY

- Biochemist with 5 years of experience managing multiple interdisciplinary research projects
- Experienced and effective writer and public speaker with ability to present complex scientific material in a clear and succinct manner
- Extensive mentoring and teaching experience guiding multiple sections of undergraduate and graduate students

#### EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy in Biochemistry <i>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Illinois)</i> Thesis Title: Topic related to Biochemistry Advisor: Dr. Phil O. Sophy	20XX
Master of Science in Biology <i>University of Florida, Gainesville, FL (UF)</i> Thesis Title: Topic related to Biology Advisor: Dr. Matt D. Gree	20XX
Bachelor of Science in Chemistry <i>Florida International University, Miami, FL (FIU)</i> Thesis Title: Topic related to Chemistry Advisor: Dr. Kimberly S. Kim	20XX

#### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Bioengineering, Illinois • Awarded the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (Parent F32) to investigate the use of hydrogel composites for brain tissue engineering • Collaborate and coordinate with faculty, administrators, and students across departments to conduct interdisciplinary research • Advise and mentor several graduate students to ensure a strong understanding of concepts and successful completion of experiments	20XX - Present
Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Biochemistry, Illinois • Planned and managed multiple research projects investigating the differentiation of regenerative stem cells in planarians • Research resulted in one published and one in preparation first author publications in scientific journals and three poster presentations at national and international meetings • Advised and mentored 3 graduate students, 5 undergraduate students, and numerous lab rotation students • Served on hiring committee for a Senior Staff Scientist and participated in selection and interviewing processes • Independently researched and wrote grant for Preliminary Examination after second year of graduate school	20XX - 20XX
Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Biology, UF • Investigated potential of transplantable stem cells to repair the brain after traumatic injury • Managed lab operations including equipment inventory, maintenance, purchasing, and network administration	20XX - 20XX
Undergraduate Research Assistant, Department of Chemistry, FIU • Investigated efficacy of novel synthetic ligands for the glutamatergic neurotransmitter system in both healthy and diseased brain tissue • Engaged in both <i>in vitro</i> and <i>in vivo</i> (mouse) studies	20XX - 20XX

## SAMPLE MODIFIED CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ (CONTINUED)

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Intern, Dow Corning Corporation, Midland, MI	Summer 20XX
• Optimized quality of thin films by measuring the physical properties as a function of production conditions	
• Collaborated with cross functional project team to analyze data, compile reports, and present to leadership	
• Research project resulted in industrial patent (patent number)	

#### INDUSTRIAL PATENT

Authors' Last name, First Initials; Lee, E.S. Title. Pat. Appl. WO 2003/097877 A2, 20XX

#### SELECTED PEER-REVIEW PUBLICATIONS (4 OF X)

Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year). Title. *Journal, Volume (Issue)*, page numbers. doi.  
Lee, E.S., other authors. (in press). Title. *Journal, Volume (Issue)*, page numbers.  
Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year produced). Title. Manuscript submitted for publication.  
Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year draft produced). Title. Manuscript in preparation.

#### INVITED ORAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (2 OF X)

Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year, Month). Title. Minisymposium on subject, Meeting, City, State.  
Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year, Month). Title. Meeting, City, State.

#### POSTER PRESENTATIONS (3 OF X)

Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year, Month). Title. Poster session presented at Meeting, City, State.  
Lee, E.S., other authors. (Year, Month). Title. Paper presented at Meeting, City, State

#### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Society for the Advancement of Hispanics and Native Americans in Science	
University of Illinois local chapter	20XX - Present
• Treasurer: Manage annual budget of \$3000	20XX - Present
• Webmaster: Maintain website with regular updates	20XX - Present
• Secretary: Promoted science careers to minority students	20XX
American Chemical Society (ACS)	
East Central Illinois Section	20XX - Present
• Public Relations Chair: Publicized scientific events to general public	20XX
Florida International University Student Affiliates Chapter	20XX - 20XX

# Writing the Resume

# Bullet Points

*Go beyond listing job responsibilities or tasks*

- Supporting evidence
- Quantify where you can
- Focus on skills relevant to the position
- Explain what you did and how/why you did it

# Describing Skills

- Not a credential
- Not what you know but how you **apply** what you know
- It **produces** something
- Developed **through** experience
- Can be “*big*” or “*small*”
- Can be “*hard*” or “*soft*”

# Remember it's a Response

- Your resume should reflect your **largest overlap** and/or **strongest case** for what the employer wants for that position
- May require you to adjust how you describe your skills

# Resume Bullet Point – Example I

## EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Researcher

August 2016 – May 2018

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

- Wrote a book-length study of the political uses of agricultural metaphors in English poetry, 1532-1651
- Presented papers at a Renaissance Society of America meeting, a Modern Language Association convention, and other conferences

# Resume Bullet Point – Example I

## EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Researcher

August 2016 – May 2018

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

- Wrote a book-length study of the political uses of agricultural metaphors in English poetry, 1532-1651
- Presented papers at a Renaissance Society of America meeting, a Modern Language Association convention, and other conferences

## EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Researcher

August 2016 – May 2018

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

- Conducted qualitative research and analyzed data from 300+ sources to identify patterns and key questions
- Drafted clear reports and compelling presentations for diverse audiences
- Managed large project while juggling competing demands and deadlines



# Resume Bullet Point – Example II

Teaching Assistant

2014 - 2016

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

- Led discussion sessions
- Wrote quizzes and graded exams
- Used in-class group assignments

# Resume Bullet Point – Example II

Teaching Assistant

2014 - 2016

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

- Led discussion sessions
- Wrote quizzes and graded exams
- Used in-class group assignments

Teaching Assistant

2014 - 2016

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

- Conveyed technical information in biweekly discussion sections
- Developed weekly small group exercises to facilitate learning
- Tailored instruction for individual student needs during office hours

# Translating Skills

- Visualize skills in different contexts
- Focus on actions – not content
- Look for themes
- Make your language general
  - Teaching = Training
  - Grading = Assessing
  - Protocols = Processes

# How Do I Know What Skills Employers Want?

# In the Job Ad

**Associate Consultant, AchieveMission A:**  
An Associate Consultant **collaborates** with dedicated AchieveMission Senior Consultants and Partners in the delivery of AchieveMission's consulting programs. He/she **engages directly with clients** and helps to build the **shared body of knowledge** through **research, analysis, and documentation.**

**Specific Responsibilities**

- Work as part of a **diverse team**, forging **close relationships** with clients and colleagues to develop and implement human capital management strategies in a **collaborative** professional environment
- Conduct **quantitative and qualitative research** including through reviews of client processes and documentation, online surveys, and interviews of client leaders and staff
- Analyze data and **craft clear and compelling presentations** and related materials for clients and funders
- Support **project management** by monitoring progress against timelines, milestones and budgets for **multiple concurrent engagements**
- Assist in **developing and continuously improving** the firm's internal **knowledge management** and evaluation systems, data and tools, as well as external white papers and **conference presentations**
- Provide other marketing and administrative support as appropriate

**Qualifications**

- Knowledge, passion, and engagement** with the nonprofit sector and our organization's mission
- Compelling interest in leadership development, human capital management, and/or organizational development
- Proven ability to use **outstanding interpersonal, political navigation, and communication skills** to create organizational change
- Proven ability to use **analytical skills** to assess **large volumes of qualitative and quantitative data**, find patterns and core issues, and present fact-based recommendations Highly motivated self-starter with demonstrated comfort taking initiative
- Excellent **verbal and written communication skills**, including editing and presenting
- Strong **project management and organization skills**, with ability to juggle multiple demands
- Humility** to recognize that we are learning all the time, and the hunger to use challenges as opportunities to gain new knowledge

**Research Associate—Education Practice Area**  
**Hanover Research**

**The Role**

The Research Associate is responsible for the production of strategic briefings on an extremely wide variety of topics, and will gain exposure to issues facing Hanover Research's education clients, which primarily consist of K-12 school districts and higher education institutions. This position will allow for the swift development and refinement of a comprehensive set of primary and secondary research skills and provides the opportunity to develop a relationship with a young and rapidly-growing enterprise. We expect all employees to be intellectually curious, ambitious, and interested in assuming increasing levels of responsibility. This position will report to the practice area specific Content Director.

**Responsibilities**

- Create client-ready deliverables on a variety of market research topics with minimal guidance or oversight;
  - Analyze complex research requests to provide actionable recommendations and key findings;
  - Manage tight deadlines to create reports requiring few edits quickly;
  - Collect and analyze research data from surveys and other primary sources;
  - Compile online sources from relevant databases to support recommendations and insights;
  - Conduct in-depth interviews with but not limited to industry experts, member customers, competitors, competitor customers, or anyone relevant to our research;
- Other research special projects as needed.

**Desired Skills and Attributes**

- Strong command of primary, secondary, and quantitative methodologies and procedures;
- Willingness to tackle complex, often unfamiliar research requests;
- Ability to work quickly and independently with minimal guidance or oversight;
- Ability to work under pressure and multitask in a fast-paced environment;
- Experience writing and researching for a business or professional audience;
- Experience in an undergraduate or graduate research role (institutional research, assessment, etc.) is preferred;
- Ability to accept feedback and constructive critique positively;
- Demonstrable problem solving skills;
- Strong command of the English language and demonstrated writing and editing skills;
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills;
- Extremely strong and demonstrable work ethic;
- Proven academic achievement;
- High comfort level with Microsoft Office applications.

**Experience Requirement**

1 - 3 years of business or academic experience conducting research, survey design/analysis, or professional writing. Applied market research experience is preferred.

**Job Title:** Molecular Biologist  
**Function:** Research & Development

**Job Description:**

Seeking a highly motivated scientist with a strong background in molecular biology and microbiology. Experience in standard molecular biology techniques such as PCR, nucleic acid purification and cloning, and software for DNA analysis is required. Working knowledge of bioinformatics tools and an interest in developing Synthetic Biology workflows are highly desirable. Experience in microbial physiology and statistical analysis are desired. The successful candidate will have demonstrated ability to work under minimal direction, be able to develop experimental strategies and interact with other scientists to support projects in strain development, metabolic engineering and fermentation.

**Requirements:** BS/MS in Biochemistry, Microbial Genetics, Microbiology or related biological sciences. Attention to detail, data presentation and troubleshooting, strong communication skills, and ability to work within teams are essential. Experience in statistical analysis and fermentation development is a plus.

**Job Related and Essential Qualifications:**

- Self-starter
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Team player
- Strong relationship building abilities
- Superior organizational skills

# NACE 2018 Job Outlook Survey

## Attributes Employers Seek On a Candidate's Resume

Attribute	% of Respondents
Problem-solving skills	82.9%
Ability to work in a team	82.9%
Communication skills (written)	80.3%
Leadership	72.6%
Strong work ethic	68.4%
Analytical/quantitative skills	67.5%
Communication skills (verbal)	67.5%
Initiative	67.5%
Detail-oriented	64.1%
Flexibility/adaptability	60.7%
Technical skills	59.8%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	54.7%
Computer skills	48.7%
Organizational ability	48.7%
Strategic planning skills	39.3%
Creativity	29.1%

# Four Principles for Resume Writing

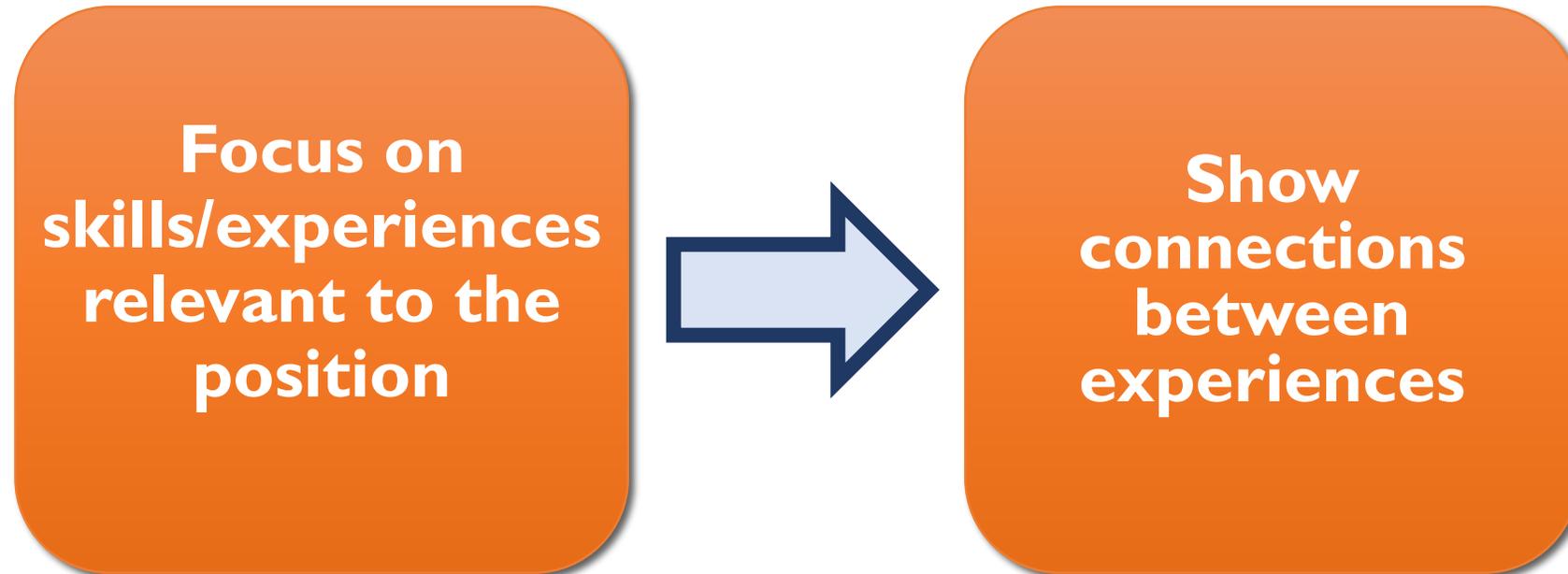
# Principle 1: Know your Audience

**Who will be reading?  
What do they care about?**



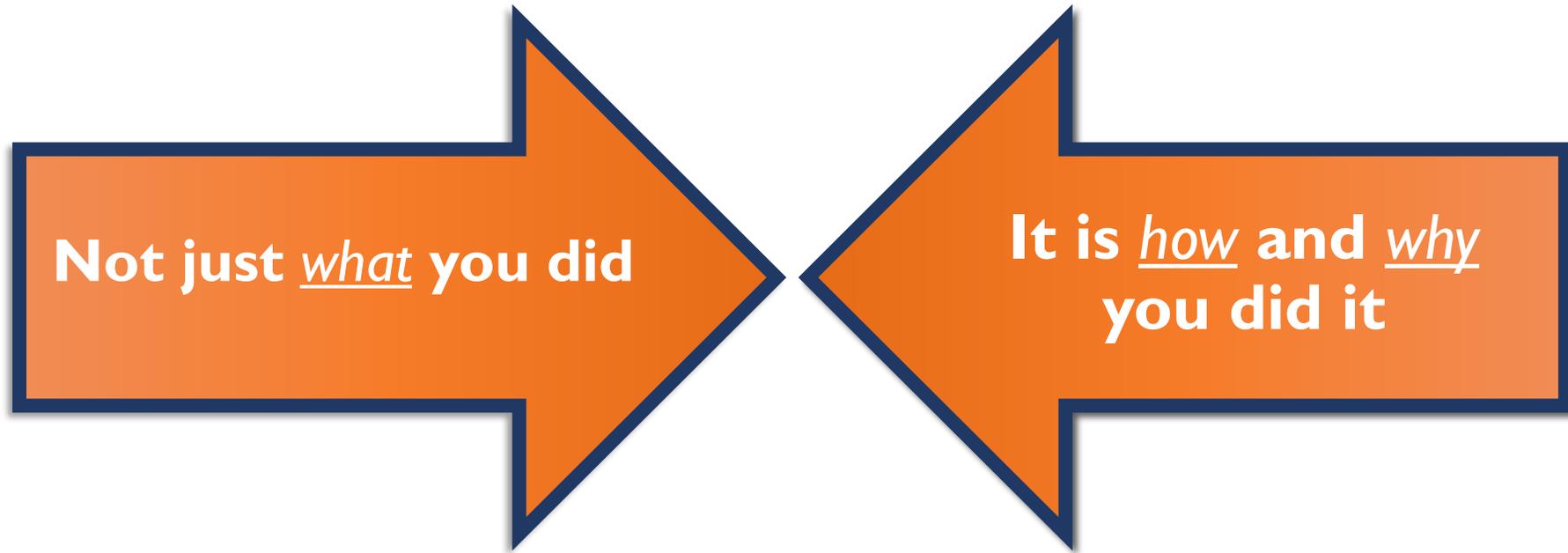
**How can you connect your  
background with their needs?**

# Principle 2: Highlight Relevant Skills



- Quantify where possible
- Explain/interpret your experience

# Principle 3: Articulate your Value



- What do you have to offer?
- Why are you a good fit?

# Principle 4: Visual Appeal

Guide your reader's eye



Prioritize: top and left



Use **bold**, *italics*, and •bullets



Use white space & readable fonts

# Questions?

Get the slides at: <http://go.grad.illinois.edu/MCBslides>

# How Can We Help?

*Free, confidential, responsive*

Sign up for an appointment at: [go.illinois.edu/GradCareersAppt](https://go.illinois.edu/GradCareersAppt)

Claim your account at [handshake.illinois.edu](https://handshake.illinois.edu)

*Job postings, information sessions, career fairs*

**GRADCareers:** Twice-monthly email newsletter (tips, jobs, events)

Subscribe at [go.grad.illinois.edu/GradCareersSubscribe](https://go.grad.illinois.edu/GradCareersSubscribe)