What is a Resume: A resume is a concise document that summarizes your education, skills, experiences, and accomplishments. It serves as a snapshot of your qualifications, tailored to highlight your suitability for a specific job, internship, or opportunity.

Why Is a Resume Important in College?

Job and Internship Applications:
A well-crafted resume is often the first step in applying for jobs, internships, or on-campus positions. It helps you stand out by showing employers what you can bring to their organization.

Scholarships and Academic Opportunities:
Some scholarships, study-abroad programs, or research opportunities require a resume as part of the application process.

Graduate School Applications:
If you plan to continue your education, a resume can demonstrate your academic achievements and relevant experiences.

Showcasing Growth and Development:
College is a time to build skills and gain experience. A resume allows you to document your progress and reflect on your accomplishments.

Networking and Career Fairs:
At events like career fairs, having a polished resume ready to share with potential employers makes a strong impression and can open doors to future opportunities.

Building Confidence:
Creating a resume helps you recognize your strengths and articulate your goals, which can boost your confidence in professional settings.

In college, even if you don't have extensive work experience, your resume can highlight coursework, projects, leadership roles, and volunteer activities that demonstrate your potential. Starting early gives you the opportunity to refine it as you gain more experience.

1. Personal Statement

- **Goal:**
  To provide a brief and clear overview of the student's qualities, strengths, and motivations that are most relevant to potential employers. This statement should convey the student's enthusiasm, work ethic, and key skills that would make them a valuable asset in a professional environment. Rather than being overly focused on career advice, this section should focus on what employers look for in a candidate, such as reliability, communication skills, and a proactive attitude. The goal is to help the student craft a statement that presents them as a motivated, capable individual who is ready to contribute to an organization, even if they lack direct industry experience.

Why it matters:
Employers want to know what a candidate can bring to the table. For first-year students, the personal statement is a chance to showcase their potential by highlighting soft skills, enthusiasm for learning, and any relevant experiences that align with the types of roles they may be applying for. This statement sets the tone for the resume and should demonstrate qualities that employers value, such as accountability, teamwork, and a positive attitude toward challenges.

2. Contact Information

- **Goal:**
  To ensure the employer or recruiter can easily reach the student. The contact information should be professional and up to date, providing essential details such as email, phone number, and any professional online profiles (LinkedIn, portfolio, etc.).

Why it matters:
This section is basic but crucial for first impressions. A professional email address and inclusion of relevant links (e.g., LinkedIn) help establish credibility.

3. Education

- **Goal:**
  To highlight the student's academic achievements, including their degree, coursework, expected graduation date, and any honors.

Why it matters:
This demonstrates the student's commitment to their education and can showcase any relevant skills or knowledge acquired from their studies.

4. Skills

- **Goal:**
  To showcase the student's abilities—both technical and interpersonal—that can be applied in various settings. These include software proficiency, language skills, communication abilities, teamwork, time management, and problem-solving.

Why it matters:
Even without job experience, first-year students can possess many valuable transferable skills. Highlighting these helps employers see that they have practical skills to contribute, whether in part-time roles, internships, or student projects.

5. Experience

- **Goal:**
  To describe the student's past experiences with a focus on **responsibilities** and **achievements** that demonstrate transferable skills. Bullet points should highlight specific contributions, successes, and the **impact** the student made in their role. These should be presented in **reverse chronological order**, with the most recent or relevant experiences listed first. Even if the experience is unrelated to the student's desired career, the emphasis should be on **skills gained** (e.g., leadership, communication, problem-solving) and **specific outcomes** that are relevant to future employers.

  Why it matters:
  Work experience in any form—whether paid or unpaid—helps demonstrate a student's practical knowledge and soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and time management. For first-year students, this section proves they can take on responsibilities and learn on the job, even if those roles aren't directly related to their field of study.

How to Describe Achievements and Responsibilities:

1. **Use Action Verbs:**
   Begin each bullet point with a strong action verb that clearly defines what the student did. For example, "Managed," "Coordinated," "Assisted," "Led," "Developed," etc. This adds energy and focus to the resume.
2. **Focus on Achievements:**
   Whenever possible, include specific achievements and quantifiable outcomes. For instance, instead of just saying "Assisted customers," say "Assisted over 100 customers daily, consistently receiving positive feedback for efficiency and customer service."
3. **Highlight Transferable Skills:**
   Even if the work is unrelated to the student's future career, emphasize the **skills developed** that are applicable across roles. For example, customer service experience may demonstrate strong communication and problem-solving abilities.

4. **Use Numbers or Specifics:**
   When applicable, include numbers or details that make the accomplishments tangible. For example: "Supervised a team of 10 volunteers" or "Increased social media engagement by 30% through targeted campaigns."

Key Tips:

- **Responsibilities vs. Achievements:**
  - **Responsibilities** describe the tasks and duties in the role (e.g., "Managed customer inquiries, led group projects, ensuring collaboration and timely completion").
  - **Achievements** go beyond responsibilities by demonstrating **impact** or **success** in the role (e.g., "Fostered collaboration among team members, resulting in the early completion of the group project and earned the highest grade in the class").
- **Reverse Chronological Order:**
  Always list the most recent experiences first. For example, if the student worked a part-time job during the summer of 2023, that should come before a previous role from 2022 or earlier.

By describing each experience with a focus on **responsibilities** and **achievements**, the student will demonstrate their **impact** in previous roles, even if those roles were outside of their targeted career path. This will show employers that the student is capable, adaptable, and ready to apply their skills to future opportunities.

6. Academic Projects/Extracurricular Activities

- **Goal:**
  To highlight the student's involvement in academic projects, group work, or extracurricular activities that demonstrate leadership, teamwork, and initiative. These can be class assignments, group research projects, or leadership in clubs and organizations.

Why it matters:
Academic projects and extracurriculars show that the student is well-rounded and able to balance multiple responsibilities. This section allows them to highlight qualities such as problem-solving, leadership, and the ability to collaborate with others. For a first-year student, it is an opportunity to show growth outside the classroom.

7. Formatting & Organization

- **Goal:**
  To ensure the resume is visually appealing and easy to navigate. The formatting should be consistent, with clearly defined sections, appropriate

headings, and a clean design that allows the content to be easily read and understood. Dates should be right aligned and away from the bulk of the information.

Why it matters:
The way a resume looks directly impacts how it is perceived. For a first-year student, strong formatting shows attention to detail, professionalism, and effort. A well-organized resume makes it easier for employers to find the information they need and can make a significant difference in how a student is perceived.

8. Grammar and Spelling

- **Goal:**
  To ensure that the resume is free from errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Proper language use reflects professionalism and care in the application process.

Why it matters:
A resume with errors can create a poor impression, even if the content is strong. For a first-year student, this section is particularly important to show their ability to communicate effectively and pay attention to detail, skills that will be vital in future internships or job opportunities.

9. Overall Tailoring

- **Goal:**
  To demonstrate how well the resume is tailored to the type of role or field the student is targeting. This includes how relevant the listed experiences, skills, and goals are to the student's intended career path or interests.

Why it matters:
Tailoring a resume makes the student's application more relevant and compelling. It shows initiative and understanding of the field they are pursuing. For first-year students, even if they are unsure of their exact career path, a resume that reflects an understanding of their goals and interests will stand out to employers or career advisors.

Summary:

The **goal of each focus area** is to highlight the student's potential, transferable skills, and passion for their academic and professional development. For first-year college students, the focus should be on **demonstrating enthusiasm, responsibility, and a willingness to learn**, even if they do not have much industry-specific experience yet. By effectively communicating their **skills, experiences, and academic potential**, students can create a compelling resume that will make them stand out to employers and career advisors

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Score
Personal Statement	Clear and concise, highlighting strengths, goals, and enthusiasm. Tailored to the role or field of interest.	Well-written but could include more specific details about career goals or academic interests.	General statement, lacking clarity on career goals or strengths.	Lacks a clear personal statement or is irrelevant to the role or field.	
Contact Information	Professional and complete contact details (email, phone number, LinkedIn, etc.).	Includes contact info but missing one element (e.g., professional email, phone number).	Missing one or more key contact details (e.g., professional email, phone number).	Incomplete or unprofessional contact details.	
Education	Lists degree(s), institution, and expected graduation date. With appropriate abbreviation.	Lists abbreviated degree or institution name	High school education details included, missing college/university details	Missing key educational details like high school or college/university details.	
Skills	Includes a diverse range of transferable skills (e.g., communication, time management, teamwork), as well as relevant software or technical skills.	Includes key skills such as communication or teamwork but may lack technical skills or specific examples.	Lists some basic skills but lacks depth or industry-specific relevance.	Minimal skills listed or irrelevant to career development.	
Experience	Includes full-time, part-time jobs, internships, volunteer work, campus involvement or academic projects. Describes specific responsibilities and skills gained.	Lists work or volunteer experience but could elaborate on the skills learned or responsibilities.	Mentions work or volunteer experience but lacks detail on responsibilities or skills.	Lacks work experience or projects.	
Formatting & Organization	Easy-to-read layout with clear sections, consistent formatting, and good use of white space.	Clear format with minor inconsistencies in spacing or headings.	Adequately formatted but could improve readability or visual appeal.	Disorganized or cluttered, making it difficult to read.	
Grammar & Spelling	No errors; perfect grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Few minor errors in grammar or spelling that do not affect readability.	Some grammatical or spelling errors that do not severely detract from the resume.	Numerous errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation.	