Resumes

This handout should help you by answering fundamental questions to get you started on your resume.

How do I generate material?

Because each resume you send out should be catered to a specific employer, it's beneficial to have a bank of your qualifications you can select from, called a *master resume*. To create a master resume, write down as many of the following as you can in a blank document:

- Employment history
- Education
- Leadership roles
- Technical and software skills
- Conferences and workshops
- Publications
- Memberships in organizations
- Language skills
- Volunteer and service experiences
- Awards and honors
- Certifications, licenses, and trainings

Try to include as much detail as you can so that in future resumes you can simply copy the needed information from your master resume. Don't hesitate to reach out to anyone who might remember this information, like family members, old coworkers, or friends. Also try talking through each semester and summer with a friend -- orally describing what you've done not only helps you recall, but is also a warmup for future interviews.

How do I showcase my transferable skills?

Transferable skills are skills that you gain from virtually anywhere that are useful across many different industries.

Some examples of transferable skills include:
- Organization
- Written communication
- Dependability
- Teamwork

When deciding which transferable skills to highlight in your resume for a specific job, refer to the job posting. Job postings will often spell out the skills employers are looking for, and thus, what you should be sure to include. It's not enough to just list that you're organized and dependable on a resume, though; employers need evidence and details to support your claims.

Consider the following three descriptions that might be under someone's resume section about their work as a tutor. The tutor wants to answer a job description that asks for interpersonal communication skills.

Level 1: Tutors students
While this is true, tutoring can look very different depending on the person. Tutoring could mean running an SI pass or helping friends with homework. This description doesn't tell the employer specifics about what a tutor does.

Level 2: Participates in nondirective tutoring training course
This description now tells the employer that the tutor was trained, which adds to their credibility. But, it emphasizes the coursework aspect and leaves the employer wondering: what is *nondirective* tutoring?

Level 3: Practices nondirective writing tutoring through active listening, strategic questions, and referring to project guidelines
This description emphasizes the act of tutoring, but also highlights the transferable skills (listening, asking questions, following guidelines, attention to detail) gained from tutoring. It doesn't provide a direct definition of what nondirective tutoring is, but because this description lists what happens during a tutoring session, the employer can glean how they communicate with clients.

How do I implement a strong visual hierarchy?

Visual hierarchy is the order in which a reader processes visual information. You can use strong visual hierarchy to let viewers know which information is important and distinct from other information.

An example of weak visual hierarchy

Education: Bachelor's of English, Emphasis in Professional Writing
University of Idaho, Moscow, ID, May 2020

Education

Bachelor's of English, Emphasis in Professional Writing

University of Idaho | Moscow, ID
May 2020

Elements you can use to create hierarchy

- Color: bright colors are more likely to draw attention over muted ones
- Contrast: dramatically contrasted colors will catch the eye easily
- Alignment: an element that breaks away from the alignment of others will attract more attention
- Repetition: repeating styles can give the impression that content is related
- Proximity: closely placed elements will also appear related
- Whitespace: more space around elements will attract the eye toward them
- List from https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/visual-hierarchy

Decide on a few elements you will use, and stick to them. Your hierarchy should follow a pattern so that its readers can group like information. For example, "all of my headers are going to be bold, 14pt, and the same font as the rest of the body copy." Then, when someone looks at your resume, they'll know that all of those parts that look the same are all section headers.

Where can I get help?

The University of Idaho Career Services Department offers resume, cover letter, and CV resources, which can be found on their webpage or at their office in the Vandal Success Center on the third floor of the ISUB. Use the Career Services' resources for resume examples, checklists, and basics, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with drop-ins from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Writing Center is currently available online from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Fridays, and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Sundays (subject to change and availability).