

BENNINGTON

Building Your Professional Resume

By this point as a Bennington alum, you will have written multiple resumes. It's always good to review the basics, though. These are crucial elements in a successful resume.

A good resume must have...

- An easy to read format with a clear header, identifiable sections, and consistent formatting.
- A focus on essential, professional information most relevant to the position.
- Clear, action oriented accomplishment statements using action verbs.

Include all of these components

- Identification (in header): Full name, current/permanent address, phone number, email. Note: Make sure that your voicemail message and email name sound professional.
- Education: Institution(s) attended, location (city, state), degree earned or in progress, area of concentration, graduation or anticipated graduation dates, relevant coursework, awards/honors earned, GPA.
- Experience: Work/research/volunteer experience listed with the most recent first.
- Skills: Computer/software skills, language proficiencies, research techniques or technical knowledge.
- Note: You may also add components such as: "Honors and Awards" or "Interests." Only add these sections if they add key value.

Make your resume short, specific, and focused on the job description

- Tailor your resume to the job. The average reader spends seconds skimming a resume. Your resume should visually and verbally make the reader understand why you are a fit.
- If you are applying to two different types of positions, each should have its own resume with tailored content (for example, one for visual arts, another for social action).
- Unless you have been in the field for more than 10 years, limit your resume to one page.
- Quantify whenever possible. For example, if you worked as a camp counselor, indicate the number of children you were responsible for overseeing and their ages.

A list of things to avoid

- Computer templates. Though tempting, most strong resumes are custom made.
- Lying. It sounds obvious, but if you did not graduate, do not indicate a degree. If you earned a Bachelor of Arts (as all Bennington College students do) do not list a BS or BFA. If you have not started working someplace yet, do not put it on your resume.
- Inconsistency in formatting and typographical errors. Proofread your resume. Many applicants lose job opportunities just because of typos.
- Non-standard fonts, colored/designed paper, graphics. The content of your resume should make it stand out, not the formatting. A resume is a clean, professional document.
- Overuse of emphasis tools. If everything is bold or italicized, nothing is emphasized.
- Subjective language. Leave out subjective language such as "kind" or "caring" when describing your roles. Resume language should be action and outcome oriented.

Resume Tips for Alumni

As you move forward in the professional world, you will need to further refine and curate your resume and cover letter to be sure they're geared towards specific jobs. On the following pages, you'll find a sample resume and cover letter of a recent graduate, "Brianna Bennington," applying for work in graphic design. Below are some guiding principles reflected in her resume that are useful to follow no matter what your field.

- **Education**

As a Bennington student, you should describe your Plan in a way that is succinct and understandable for an outside audience. For example, if your Plan focused on "marginalized voices in literature and the arts," you might list your concentration as "Literature / Visual Arts" next to your Bachelor of Arts degree. To include your full plan title, do it in a way that won't leave the reader confused. You can always describe your Plan in more

detail in your interview, and employers will likely be interested in your creativity and self-designed work. Be sure to include your graduation year and any coursework that is relevant to the job you are applying to, especially if you don't have extensive experience in that field. For example, if you are applying for a graphic design job, list 3-4 abridged course titles that bolster your design experience, especially advanced or independent study coursework. Also, make sure to list any honors, scholarships, or awards, all with clear descriptive titles.

- **Relevant vs. Other Experience**

As a Bennington alum, you likely have a wide range of experience, not all of which relates to what you want to do in your career. In order to highlight your most relevant experience, while still adhering to conventions of chronology (displaying your experience in order from most recent to least recent), you can create two sections. For example, as a prospective graphic designer you can help the reader by creating a "Design Experience" section, followed by a separate "Other Experience" section, and separate your work experience accordingly. Be sure to include long-lasting positions or other positions that show skill sets and responsibilities which might be useful to your employer (examples of team-based work, leadership roles, etc.).

- **Strong, Curated Accomplishment Statements and Skills Section**

When describing your work, make sure to order your accomplishment statements so that your most relevant tasks appear first. For example, you'll see in Brianna Bennington's resume for a graphic designer and website editor position that she placed her design and social media tasks in the Bennington College Admissions Office before her touring responsibilities. This way, if an employer is only skimming her resume, she knows that the most relevant tasks won't be overlooked. The same is true of her skills section. It specifies that these are her "Technology and Communication" skills, because those are the skills that are most relevant to the position she's applying for.

Brianna Bennington

123 Street Name, Berkeley, CA 94701 • 123.456.7899 • bbennington@bennington.edu

EDUCATION

Bennington College, Bennington, VT

BA in Visual Arts (self-designed concentration titled: Animation and Design as Social Practice), June 2015, GPA 3.9
Relevant Coursework: Web as Artistic Platform, Painting Studio, Social Practices in Art, Introduction to the Moving Image, Documentary Production

HONORS

Recipient of Brockway Merit Scholarship, Bennington College, 2011-2015; National Merit Finalist, 2010

DESIGN + COMMUNICATION EXPERIENCE

Solid Ground Ecological Design, Berkeley, CA

Office Manager, August 2015 - Present

Designed a new, modern and easily navigable Squarespace website for this boutique landscape design company, which increased monthly site visits by 20%. Inventoried existing content and developed additional copy and images. Created a shot list and photographed for the site. Prepared images using Photoshop. Managed company Tumblr. Designed company business cards and promotional apparel. Conduct research and write the bidding documents for landscape design projects.

Bennington College Office of Admissions, Bennington, VT

Admissions Intern, October 2013 - June 2015

Wrote original content for Admissions official Tumblr blog, a key component of the College's social media strategy. Maintained Facebook communications with incoming freshman, aimed at fostering engagement and class camaraderie. Corresponded with potential and current applicants, answering questions via e-mail and telephone with a personalized approach. Selected to lead individually-tailored campus tours for prospective students, one of the College's highest yielding admissions efforts.

Build This Together, Auckland, New Zealand

Design Intern, January 2015 - February 2015 (7 week internship)

Worked with a dynamic team to design a playground for an inner city elementary school with low funding using AutoCAD and SketchUp. Designed and built concrete furniture required to be inviting and idiosyncratic for use in a public art space and garden. Assisted in the design and maintenance of planters made from recycled wood pallets on site. Photographed project sites for use in design process. Contributed to concept development meetings with clients.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Brooklyn Recording, Brooklyn, NY

Studio Intern, January 2014 - February 2014 (7 week internship)

Apprenticed with a small team of notable sound engineers. Collaborated on the production of recorded music and promotional video projects. Operated boom mic during artist interviews. Assisted with the set up, engineering, breakdown and mixing of audio recording sessions. Used Avid ProTools to record and edit music.

Austin Middle School, Austin, TX

School Counselor Intern, January 2013 - February 2013 (7 week internship)

Designed educational programs within the outreach unit and alternative school on topics including substance misuse and drunk driving. Crafted presentations on these programs and delivered them to class of 24 students. Assisted in the creation and implementation of Individualized Education Plans (IEP) for 12 students. Tutored 8 students with learning disabilities and behavioral problems.

TECHNOLOGY + COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Competent in Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign and Acrobat. Comfortable designing layouts in Squarespace and WordPress. Experienced with AutoCad and SketchUp. Basic understanding of HTML and CSS. Skilled with both Microsoft and Apple computers. Fluent in social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr). Competent with Avid ProTools and Logic. Fluent in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. Comfortable with Microsoft Excel. Competent with Final Cut Pro and iMovie. Experienced digital photographer and videographer. Fluent in French and have a comprehensive understanding of Spanish and Italian.

