

GRADUATE SCHOOL TIPS: Graduate School Résumé

Source: www.uwsuper.edu/career

A graduate school résumé is a document that accompanies your entrance application to a college/university. It provides the admissions committee with more information than what's included in the application and focuses on what they need to know to better evaluate your candidacy. This résumé is different than the job search résumé. Job search résumés are designed to get you an interview; graduate school résumés are designed to enhance your application to a school and provide the reader with a sense of your academic potential in their program of study.

It is similar to your job search resume in the following ways:

- Crisp language – use action verbs to describe your experiences
- Clean layout – use lots of “white space” so that it is easy to read
- No mistakes – no typos, no grammatical errors

It is different from your job search resume in the following ways:

- Is not limited to one page in length (two-three pages are fine, though your contact info. must be on all pages)
- Separates your work and non-work experiences into different sections
- Includes all your experiences – not just the ones targeting a specific job
- References your education and relevant coursework and academic projects

Your graduate school résumé may include different categories than your friend's. That's because your experiences will be different. The sections you choose to include and the order in which you choose to list them should be strategic on your part. What do you want the admissions committee to pay the most attention to?

Some of the most commonly used categories are:

- Objective (optional – if you use this be specific to the school and graduate program)
- Education
- Relevant Coursework
- Research/Teaching Interests
- Academic Experience/Highlights
- Employment
- Volunteer, Community, and/or Extra-Curricular Involvement
- Certifications/Professional Development

LAYOUT

The layout and order of your résumé should be determined by what you want to emphasize to the admissions committee. The most important and relevant experiences should be at the top, while the least are at the bottom. Imagine if the committee was crunched for time and can only discuss the top two-thirds of your résumé. Organize accordingly. Below is a basic order for a graduate school resume, but remember, the items you include will be determined by the program to which you're applying and your own unique academic and skill sets.

Objective: A short sentence identifying the school and the program to which you are applying. Example: *Applying for admission into Slippery Rock University's Doctor of Physical Therapy program.*

Education: This should be the most important entry in your graduate school résumé. After providing the basics (name of undergraduate college/university, degree, graduation date, major, minor, GPA, etc.), select the outstanding academic accomplishments to highlight for the admissions committee. These may be sub-topics under Education or they may be their own categories. Areas that may be included are:

- Research
- Scholarships
- Independent Study
- International Study
- Honors
- Conferences
- Presentations
- Publications

Academic Experience, Course Highlights, and/or Internships: Highlight particularly relevant academic courses by providing more details about these courses. Describe two to three upper-level courses that provided hands-on experiences or in-depth study with bullet statements. Include only the most salient courses relevant to your intended graduate school major. Do not list all courses. Also, most graduate schools prefer applicants with a combination of academic and experiential preparation. Some graduate schools require volunteer or internship experience. Provide details about your related experiences.

Employment: List the most relevant and recent job positions. Be sure to include 2-3 bulleted points that highlight the skills and experiences that will best support your application for graduate school and your major area of study.

Volunteer, Community, and/or Extra-Curricular Involvement: If you participated in campus or community activities that developed your leadership, time management, or other skills important to your success in graduate school, include these activities and provide details that show your active participation.

Certifications and/or Professional Development: Experiences not related to your graduate school admission do not need to be included unless they show relevant skill development.

Additional Categories: Add these if you have extra room or if you have done something especially noteworthy. Additional categories you might choose to include are:

- Memberships
- Leadership Experience
- Foreign Languages (remember to indicate levels of proficiency)

Don't be afraid to generate your own categories depending upon your unique experiences