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## Introducing Optimal Resume

Creating a resume. You can probably think of a hundred other tasks you would rather tackle than to sit down and finally put a resume together, including doing your roommate's laundry and offering to scrub every inch of the bathroom with a toothbrush.

Getting your accomplishments down on paper is certainly difficult, but formatting them into a powerful first impression is enough to send you screaming from the room. Isn't there anyone who can help you before you reach the point of insanity?

Yes! There is help! The Career & Intern Services Center (CISC) is proud to introduce Optimal Resume, a new web-based service designed to help you with that pesky resume. The program will take you step by step through each section of your resume, giving you examples and guidance as you fill in your past experiences and accomplishments. When all your information has been entered, you can experiment with different formats to see which you like best—all at the click of a button!

After you have a finished product you can choose to send it to the review center for a resume critique, or if you are satisfied with your work you can simply download it as a Word document or a PDF file.

The Optimal Resume service is offered free of charge to current Bethel students and alumni. To register, go to [www.bethelcollege.edu](http://www.bethelcollege.edu), click on *Campus Services*, select *Career and Internships*, and then click on the blue *Optimal Resume* box. In the upper left corner click on the link that says "New users click here." Current students can enter their Bethel email address in the box on the left to register. Alumni should contact the CISC to obtain a special password.

If you would like to learn more about using Op-

timal Resume see the box below for information on two upcoming workshops. Contact the CISC at 574-257-2661 for more information about this or any other CISC services.

## Optimal Resume Workshop

Learn how to use this powerful web-based tool to create your optimal first impression!

**Tuesday, January 22**  
**AC005 ~ 9:45 am—10:45 am**

**Wednesday, January 23**  
**AC005 ~ 6:15 pm—7:15 pm**

This free workshop is open to students, alumni and faculty. Both sessions will cover the same information, so you only need to attend one.

**To register, call the CISC at 574-257-2661.**

## Avoid the Top 10 Resume Mistakes

It's deceptively easy to make mistakes on your resume and exceptionally difficult to repair the damage once an employer gets it. So prevention is critical, especially if you've never written one before. Here are the most common pitfalls and how you can avoid them.

### 1. Typos and Grammatical Errors

Your resume needs to be [grammatically perfect](#). If it isn't, employers will read between the lines and draw not-so-flattering conclusions about you, like: "This person can't write," or "This person obviously doesn't care."

### 2. Lack of Specifics

Employers need to understand what you've done and [accomplished](#). For example:

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## Avoid the Top 10 Resume Pitfalls, continued

A. Worked with employees in a restaurant setting.  
 B. Recruited, hired, trained and supervised more than 20 employees in a restaurant with \$2 million in annual sales.

Both of these phrases could describe the same person, but details and specifics in example B will more likely grab an employer's attention.

### 3. Attempting One Size Fits All

Whenever you try to develop a [one-size-fits-all resume](#), you almost always end up with something employers will toss in the recycle bin. Employers want you to write a resume specifically for them. They expect you to clearly show how and why you fit the position in a specific organization.

### 4. Highlighting Duties Instead of Accomplishments

It's easy to slip into a mode where you start listing job duties on your resume. For example:

- Attended group meetings and recorded minutes.
- Worked with children in a day-care setting.
- Updated departmental files.

Employers, however, don't care so much about what you've done as what you've accomplished in your various activities. They're looking for statements more like these:

- Used laptop computer to record weekly meeting minutes and compiled them in a Microsoft Word-based file for future organizational reference.
- Developed three daily activities for preschool-age children and prepared them for a 10-minute holiday program performance.
- Reorganized 10 years' worth of unwieldy files, making them easily accessible to department members.

### 5. Going on Too Long or Cutting Things Too Short

Despite what you may read or hear, there are no real rules governing the [length of your resume](#). Why? Because human beings, who have different preferences and expectations where resumes are concerned, will be reading it.

That doesn't mean you should start sending out five-page resumes, of course. Generally speaking, you usually need to limit yourself to a maximum of two pages. But don't feel you have to use two pages if one will do. Conversely, don't cut the meat out of your resume simply to make it conform to an arbitrary one-page standard.

### 6. A Bad Objective

Employers do read your resume's [objective statement](#), but too often they plow through vague pufferies like, "Seeking a challenging position that offers professional growth." Give employers something specific and, more importantly, something that focuses on their needs as well as your own. Example: "A challenging entry-level marketing position that allows me to contribute my skills and experience in fund-raising for nonprofits."

### 7. No Action Verbs

Avoid using phrases like "responsible for." Instead, use [action verbs](#): "Resolved user questions as part of an IT help desk serving 4,000 students and staff."

### 8. Leaving Off Important Information

You may be tempted, for example, to eliminate mention of the jobs you've taken to earn extra money for school. Typically, however, the soft skills you've gained from these experiences (e.g., work ethic, time management) are more important to employers than you might think.

### 9. Visually Too Busy

If your resume is wall-to-wall text featuring five different fonts, it will most likely give the employer a headache. So show your resume to several other people before sending it out. Do they find it visually attractive? If what you have is [hard on the eyes](#), revise.

### 10. Incorrect Contact Information

I once worked with a student whose resume seemed incredibly strong, but he wasn't getting any bites from employers. So one day, I jokingly asked him if the phone number he'd listed on his resume was correct. It wasn't. Once he changed it, he started getting the calls he'd been expecting. Moral of the story: Double-check even the most minute, taken-for-granted details -- sooner rather than later.

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Quick Links

Resume Writing

Cover Letter Writing

Making a Good First Impression (Interviewing)

What Can I Do With This Major?

### Career & Intern Services Center

Huffman Administration Building ▲ Room A316 ▲ (574) 257-2661

careerservices@bethelcollege.edu ▲ www.bethelcollege.edu >Campus Services >Career & Internships