

# RESUMES

Most employers scan your resume and cover letter in 10 seconds or less for the first time. Make a strong first impression by linking your skills, strengths, and experiences to what they are looking for. Here's how to do it.

## 1. Know your audience

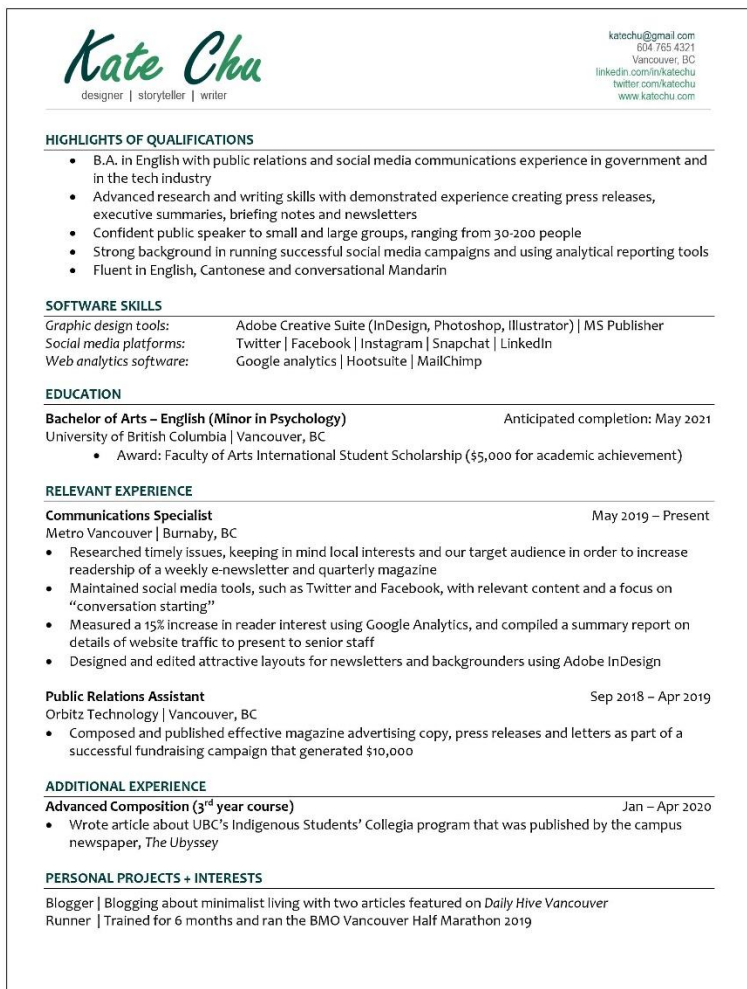
Go beyond the job posting and learn about what is priority in this industry. This information can be found on organization websites, professional associations, career fairs, mentorship or other opportunities to meet alumni and employers. This information helps you to focus the content of your application. You'll also learn if there are standard resume practices that are specific to a particular field (eg. tech, consulting, etc.).

## 2. Focus on your accomplishments

Include the results of your work in each description of your experiences. This tells a prospective employer not just what you've done, but why it mattered. Be specific and highlight the strengths, skills, values and knowledge that will be most relevant to this particular employer who is hiring for this specific job.

## 4. Go beyond paid work

Feature your strengths and past successes most relevant to the role. List experiences like academic projects or courses, volunteer or leadership experiences, community involvement, hobbies or personal interests and emphasize your transferrable skills, accomplishments and areas of strengths.



The image shows a sample resume for Kate Chu, a designer, storyteller, and writer. The resume is structured with clear sections and uses a mix of bolding and italics for emphasis. It includes contact information, a highlights of qualifications section with bullet points, software skills, education, relevant experience, additional experience, and personal projects + interests.

**Kate Chu**  
designer | storyteller | writer

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Vancouver, BC  
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**HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- B.A. in English with public relations and social media communications experience in government and in the tech industry
- Advanced research and writing skills with demonstrated experience creating press releases, executive summaries, briefing notes and newsletters
- Confident public speaker to small and large groups, ranging from 30-200 people
- Strong background in running successful social media campaigns and using analytical reporting tools
- Fluent in English, Cantonese and conversational Mandarin

**SOFTWARE SKILLS**

Graphic design tools: Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator) | MS Publisher  
Social media platforms: Twitter | Facebook | Instagram | Snapchat | LinkedIn  
Web analytics software: Google analytics | Hootsuite | MailChimp

**EDUCATION**

**Bachelor of Arts – English (Minor in Psychology)** Anticipated completion: May 2021  
University of British Columbia | Vancouver, BC

- Award: Faculty of Arts International Student Scholarship (\$5,000 for academic achievement)

**RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**

**Communications Specialist** May 2019 – Present  
Metro Vancouver | Burnaby, BC

- Researched timely issues, keeping in mind local interests and our target audience in order to increase readership of a weekly e-newsletter and quarterly magazine
- Maintained social media tools, such as Twitter and Facebook, with relevant content and a focus on “conversation starting”
- Measured a 15% increase in reader interest using Google Analytics, and compiled a summary report on details of website traffic to present to senior staff
- Designed and edited attractive layouts for newsletters and backgrounders using Adobe InDesign

**Public Relations Assistant** Sep 2018 – Apr 2019  
Orbitz Technology | Vancouver, BC

- Composed and published effective magazine advertising copy, press releases and letters as part of a successful fundraising campaign that generated \$10,000

**ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**Advanced Composition (3<sup>rd</sup> year course)** Jan – Apr 2020

- Wrote article about UBC's Indigenous Students' Collegia program that was published by the campus newspaper, *The Ubyssy*

**PERSONAL PROJECTS + INTERESTS**

Blogger | Blogging about minimalist living with two articles featured on *Daily Hive Vancouver*  
Runner | Trained for 6 months and ran the BMO Vancouver Half Marathon 2019

## 5. Tailor your application

Tell employers which skills and experiences match with the role by using a 'Highlights of Qualifications' section. Create a bullet-form list of 3-5 of your most relevant experiences, education or training, and key skills. Prioritize professional competencies and technical skills (eg. lab skills, programming languages, research methods, certifications) that are essential to the job.

## 6. Organize your content strategically

Make it easy for the employer. The way you organize your content shows which skills and experience you will use to succeed in this job. Feature your most relevant skills and experiences on the first page of your resume. Make headings specific to the type of experience you are describing. All experiences where you are developing skills are important, and you are not required to separate volunteer experience out from paid experience.

Common headings include:

- Highlights of Qualifications or Summary of Skills
- Technical Skills (if relevant to the industry)
- Education (mention grades if noteworthy)
- Relevant Experience
- Additional or Other Experience

Other headings could be: Selected Coursework or Projects, Volunteer or Community Involvement, Student Leadership, Awards (include honours, citations, scholarships), Hobbies or Interests

## 7. Showcase who you are

If you have extra space, include interests and hobbies (eg. clubs, sports, personal projects) that highlight competencies or skills you possess that the employer will value.

## 8. Format and design your document

- ✓ Use bolding, italics, spacing, and different alignments (left-align section headings, right-align dates) to organize content
- ✓ Use an easy to read design font (10-12 point)
- ✓ Write in bullet points to make it easier for employers to scan for key words
- ✓ List experiences in reverse chronological order
- ✓ Maintain consistent formatting
- ✓ Keep to two pages maximum

## 9. Create your personal brand

Make a personal letterhead with a few phrases that sum up what you do or what you stand for, adding links to your social media profiles (eg. LinkedIn) or personal website, or taking other creative approaches to the layout. Leave out personal details like citizenship, SIN, gender, or date of birth, that could potentially create bias in the recruitment process. Check out the [BC Human Rights Code](#) to learn more about your employment rights.

## 10. Ask for feedback

Attend a resume webinar, get feedback on your application from a Career Peer Coach or book an advising appointment with a Career Advisor.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Centre for Student Involvement & Careers  
Student Engagement

[students.ubc.ca/career](https://students.ubc.ca/career)

# Applied Learning Opportunity: Tailoring in Action

## Matching Your Skills to the Employers' Needs

The table below is provided as a tool to use to help you think through what the employer is looking for and how your past experiences and skills connect. You may encounter employers looking for skills you feel you do not have. Try to think critically about what you have done in your past roles and be creative. Connections often exist, even though we don't see them at first.

<b>They Want</b> (List key skills and experiences the employer stated)	<b>I Have</b> (skills, experiences, training or other qualifications)
<i>Example: organization skills</i>	Organized scheduling and logistics for groups of 10 youths ages 7-10 in weekly outdoor activities including coordinating transportation and collecting payment and waiver forms

## Identifying Your Accomplishments

To take your resume to the next level make sure you express your accomplishments. The bullet points underneath your past experiences describe your contributions to an organization, project or team. You can stand out to employers by including the results or outcomes of your efforts.

Results can be qualitative or quantitative and can even include things you have learned and feedback you have received. If possible, use numbers strategically to help the reader understand the scope and context of your work.

To write an accomplishment statement, use this formula: **Verb + Task + Result**

Here are some examples:

- **Composed and published** effective magazine advertising copy, press releases and letters as part of a successful fundraising campaign that generated \$10,000
- **Researched** timely issues, keeping in mind local interests and our target audience in order to increase readership of a weekly e-newsletter and quarterly magazine

You can also invert the formula to more strongly emphasize the result and de-emphasize the details of the task itself.

- **Created a welcoming environment for customers** by thoroughly & efficiently cleaning equipment at the end of each shift, encouraging them to return

**Exercise:** Reflect on one of your past experiences. Where did you excel? Why did it matter? How was what you did different from what someone else on your team might have done? What impacts resulted from your activities? Write some of your own accomplishment statements:

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**Pro Tip:** There may be multiple results you can think of for a single task! You can choose which result to highlight depending on what you think will be most relevant to your employer.

