

# Christina Martin's Top 10 Resume Tips for College Students

*A guide for parents who want to help their student stand out – without doing it for them!*

A student resume doesn't need to look like a 10-year professional resume, but it does need to show readiness, potential, and initiative. The goal is simple: help your student secure interviews for internships, part-time roles, research opportunities, or entry-level positions.

Here's what matters most.

1. **The resume's job is to get an interview.** A resume is not a full life history. It's a marketing document designed to show that your student has the skills, curiosity, and work ethic to succeed, and to make a hiring manager want to learn more.
2. **Clarity beats experience.** Most employers hiring students know they don't have years of experience. What they do look for is:
  - **Clear communication**
  - **Follow-through**
  - **Initiative**
  - Transferable skills

A clean easy-to-read resume goes a long way.

3. **Start with a strong top section.** At the top of the resume, include:
  - Name
  - City and state (no full address for privacy)
  - Email address (professional, not playful)
  - LinkedIn profile (if they have one)

A short summary of headline can help explain what the student is pursuing (e.g., "Finance student seeking summer internship" or "Marketing major with research and decision science experience").

4. **Education comes first – and that's okay.** For students, education is often the strongest credential. Include:
  - Degree program and major
  - University name and location

- Expected graduation date
- GPA (if strong and relevant)

Honors, scholarships, or academic programs can also be included.

5. **Experience doesn't have to be "corporate."** Experience can include:

- Internships
- Part-time jobs
- Campus leadership
- Athletics
- Research
- Volunteer work
- Class projects

What matter is **what they did and what they** learned, not just the title.

6. **Focus on accomplishments, not just duties.** Your bullets should highlight outcomes, not just duties. Encourage your student to go beyond "responsible for." Strong bullets explain:

- What they did
- How they did it
- Why it mattered

A helpful framework is the "X by Y by Z formula," popularized by former Google executive, Laszlo Bock: **Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y], by doing [Z].**

Examples:

- **Good:** "Member of Leadership for Tomorrow Society."
- **Better:** "Selected as one of 275 for this 12-month professional development program for high-achieving students."
- **Best:** "Selected as one of 275 participants nationwide for this 12-month professional development program for high-achieving students based on leadership potential and academic success."
  
- **Good:** "Grew revenue for small and medium business clients."
- **Better:** "Grew revenue for small and medium business clients by 10% QoQ."
- **Best:** "Grew revenue for 15 small and medium business clients by 10% QoQ during internship project for mapping new software features as solutions to their business goals."
  
- **Good:** "Won second place in hackathon."
- **Better:** "Won second place out of 50 teams in hackathon."



8. **Skills should be honest and relevant.** Technical or language skills are helpful, but students should only list what they can reasonably explain in an interview. Group skills logically and avoid long, unfocused lists.
9. **One resume doesn't fit every opportunity.** Encourage your student to tailor their resume for each opportunity. Save and submit it as a PDF to preserve formatting.
10. **Keep the design simple and professional.** A student resume does not need graphics, colors, or icons and NO PHOTOS. Clean formatting and standard fonts work best and are more compatible with ATS.

**A note for parents:** Your guidance is incredibly valuable, but the resume should still sound like your student. Asking good questions (“What did you actually do there?” or “What were you proud of?”) is often more helpful than rewriting it for them, as it is interview or networking practice.

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