

Resumes & Cover Letters for Architectural Designers

MARKETING YOUR EXPERIENCE

A resume is your first opportunity to “sell” your work and experience to an architecture or design firm. Most summer internships and intern architect positions will require a resume and cover letter, as well as work sample pages. Your resume should highlight the key projects and experiences that best represent the skills you will need for the desired position

RESUME 101 – BASIC RESUME CONTENT

Avoid making your resume too complicated or lengthy; it should be easy to read and show off the style of your work. Headings for resume sections include:

Personal Contact Information

List your name, address, phone number, and email. Your email address should be professional and include your name. You may also include your personal Web site, if it professionally showcases your work.

Education

Begin with the most recent degree you are pursuing or have earned. Include the institution, degree you will earn, your major(s) and minor(s), month and year of completion, and location with city and state. List additional degrees in reverse chronological order. Additional educational experiences may also be listed in this section, including study abroad and other academic programs.

Professional Experience

List any professional experience relating to your field, such as summer internships at architecture, design, or construction firms. Discuss the kinds of projects you’ve worked on, such as education or healthcare. List presentations you gave or contributed to, client meetings you attended as an intern, or the specifics on your work in a design library.

Skills

Within your resume, create a detailed skills section. Brainstorm and add skills such as design, hand sketching, rendering, schematics and model building. Be sure to highlight your soft skills like customer service, communication, and teambuilding.

Construction and carpentry skills are often a plus. Include your experience with computer hardware and software applications such as AutoCAD, Adobe software, Microsoft and others. You can include your background in sustainable design, green building, museum, art history and graphic arts.

Awards & Honors

You can also create an Awards & Honors section that could include awards/prizes from design competitions, GPA, and on-campus leadership activities and positions. Depending on your level of experience, you could list studio projects in a separate Selected Accomplishments section to add to the information you are presenting.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR RESUME AND PORTFOLIO?

For questions with your resume, stop by Quick Questions drop-in hours (Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. in DUC 110). No appointment needed. A Career Peer can review your application and provide you with edits and suggestions.

Architecture students who have already met with Martin Padilla can take advantage of Quick Advising Hours. Meet with Martin for 15 minutes in Steinberg 005. Check CAREERlink for availability.

All students can also schedule a one-on-one career advising appointment for help by calling (314) 935-5930.



CRAFTING A CREATIVE RESUME: SAMPLE 1

Resumes in architecture and the design industry are a way to market yourself and are often the first impression a firm gets of any applicant. There is also an opportunity to show off your design savvy. Following are two samples that display some do's and don'ts that you can follow.

- Avoid using images when possible. They can be distracting and should be reserved for your portfolio. There are instances when images may be appropriate but they should be used cautiously.

Your name plate should not overpower the design of the resume.

- Use fonts that place an emphasis on content. Your choice of font can say a lot about who you are as a designer. San Serif fonts are usually a cleaner choice of font.
- Avoid using large blocks of color. This can be distracting from the content.



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education

<p>washington university. st. louis, mo. may, 2014 master of architecture cumulative gpa: 3.46/4.00</p>	<p>miami university. oxford, ohio. may 2012 b.a. in architecture, minor in landscape architecture <i>cum laude & departmental honors</i></p>
<p>helsinki university of technology. espoo, finland visiting student: architecture program, spring '12</p>	<p>miami university ghana program. ghana, africa design/build studio: abrafo-odumase, summer '11</p>

professional experience

legal architects. oak brook, il. dec 12 - aug 13; summer and winter breaks
autocad drafting, model building, site surveying, design development.
projects worked on include: central dupage hospital life safety renovations, wwhs addition and renovations, project proposal for st. michael's church and parish center

community unit school district 200. wheaton, il. may 11 - aug 12; summer and winter breaks
coordinated owner responsibilities while acting as liaison between construction management/design firms and district employees during the planning and construction phases of a \$52 million renovation project.

perkins, pryde, kennedy & steevensz architects, lts. glen ellyn, il. sept 10 - may 11
first student in wheaton warrenville south h.s. history to be awarded work/study internship in architecture by high school administration and board of education.
tasks included: site surveying, materials library organization, cad drafting clerical

honors

<p>washington university design studio teaching assistant, 12-13 millstone scholarship, 12-13</p>	<p>miami university matthew derrington scholarship, 11-12 national society of collegiate scholars, 09-12 order of omega honorary society, 11-12 dean's list, 4 SEMESTERS</p>
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activities

<p>graduate architecture student council (<i>president</i>), 12-13 graduate professional council (<i>arch rep.</i>), 12-13 prograd committee (<i>arch rep.</i>), 12-13 graduate student gallery exhibition (co-chair), 12-13</p>	<p>student admissions council - dept. of arch, (<i>chair</i>), 11-12 delta upsilon fraternity (vp new member ed), 10-12 big brother/bigsister program, 09-11</p>
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skills

proficient in: microsoft office, autocad, adobe photoshop, rhinoceros 3d

CRAFTING A CREATIVE RESUME: SAMPLE 2

This is a good example of a clean and simple name plate design. You can apply it to the cover letter as well.

- Font choice is simple and consistent with the design of the portfolio. Fonts can be as small as 9 but no smaller.
- Good organization can lead to a very clear resume that conveys the information easily. The separation of education and work experience, used here, works great.
- White space is a good thing in design-related resumes. Don't overcrowd with information.

JOHN ALEXANDER SMITH		5555 Westgate Avenue, Apartment G, St. Louis, MO 63130 (314) 555-1234 bnguyen@wustl.edu
RELEVANT EXPERIENCE		EDUCATION
<p>abc architects city, state architectural intern historic preservation design and special projects hospitality and restaurant design single family residential sd + construction observation may - august 2013</p> <p>yancy of architecture city, state architectural intern large scale industrial design, cd + mep single family residential design + cd may - august 2011 + 2012</p> <p>historic ville alliance, cdc saint louis proposed master vision plan for ville neighborhood september - december 2013</p>		<p>university of illinois urbana-champaign school of architecture bachelor of science in architectural studies [may 2013]</p> <p>study abroad buenos aires, argentina [september 2011 - december 2011]</p>
PROFICIENCY		PROFILE
<p>computer aided design rhino/bongo animation, autocad, 3d studio</p> <p>macromedia dreamweaver</p> <p>adobe illustrator, acrobat, photoshop, indesign, premiere</p> <p>programming working knowledge of html + visual basic</p> <p>other microsoft office, corel packages</p>		<p>american institute of architects [aia] student director of aia illinois, elected, 2012-2013 designing tomorrow's architect, internship conference: san antonio, tx</p> <p>american institute of architecture students [aias] member 2009 - present</p> <p>[national involvement] national membership committee, appointed 2012-2013 grassroots national leadership conference, july 2010 + 2012 attendant, FORUM 2009: chicago, il, december 2009 chapter delegate, FORUM 2011: new orleans, la, december 2011</p> <p>[school involvement] chapter at washington university in st. louis webmaster, 2013-2014 [sugroups.wustl.edu/~aias]</p> <p>chapter at the university of illinois at urbana-champaign internal vice-president, 2012-2013 international chair, 2011-2012 co-founder of chapter in versailles, france secretary, 2010-2011</p> <p>women in architecture mentoring program, university of illinois mentor, 2013-present pairs women students with women alumni</p> <p>elewood e. + alelaide schwenk scholarship university of illinois school of architecture, april 2012</p>
LANGUAGES		
<p>english native</p> <p>spanish intermediate-comprehension and oral</p> <p>french intermediate-comprehension and oral</p>		



SHOWCASING YOUR WORK

In addition to your resume, you should also create a two or three-page work sample document to showcase your skills. A huge benefit of using work sample pages is that they are a cost-effective way to showcase your work to many employers. This can include work from studios, internships, travel experiences, and your own individual artwork. Your sample pages are a “mini-portfolio” and should also be designed to match your resume and cover letter.

Portfolios

A portfolio is an additional way to showcase your past experience. The first step in creating your portfolio is to document your work. You should keep photos or

copies of work you’ve done for studio, classes or summer internships. It is important that your portfolio give a brief, but consistent view of your work over time. If you are unsure of what to include in your portfolio, ask a faculty member for help. You will most likely create one portfolio to use in interviews to showcase your work. You may decide to use a professional document portfolio or design your own binding system or case to display your work. Just make sure the cover is durable. Avoid using complex binding systems that are overly detailed and take away from the content. The inside pages should include samples of your best work, as well as your resume. Your portfolio should also include artistic or design elements that reflect your style.

COVER LETTER 101

A cover letter is your introduction to a prospective employer. Your letter should demonstrate your ability to think clearly and write persuasively. An effective cover letter makes you stand out as a candidate. In fact, some employers consider it even more important than your resume.

Your cover letter should create a link between the needs of the organization and your skills and experience related to those needs. Demonstrate your motivation, creativity and knowledge of the organization. Rather than restating what is on your resume, enhance your qualifications by describing how your past experience will benefit the employer. A cover letter should always accompany your resume and should match the overall design and feel of your resume.

WRITING YOUR COVER LETTER

- Write a custom cover letter for each position and print it out on the same paper as your resume.
- Address your letter to a specific person. If you do not have a name, call the organization and ask for the name and title of the person who should receive your letter. Only as a last resort, may you use “Dear Hiring Manager.”
- Avoid using “to whom it may concern” as it sounds like you have not taken the time to do some research
- In general, cover letters specifically state the position you are seeking (do this in the first sentence), tell the reader why you think you should be considered and suggest the next course of action (e.g., you will follow up with a phone call).
- Research the organization, study the position description, and tailor your letter accordingly. Your initiative and knowledge will make your letter stand out from others. Resist the temptation to use a standard letter that only changes the company name.
- Focus on the reader’s needs, not yours. Make your qualifications clear and emphasize how you can help the organization.
- Limit the letter to one page. Business writing is different from academic writing. Keep it simple, straight-forward and to the point.
- Make the most of referrals and connections. Name the person who referred you in the opening sentence. The familiar name will grab the reader’s attention.
- Cover letters serve as a method to help employers evaluate your writing ability. Spelling and grammar must be perfect. Ask friends, mentors and advisors to review your letter and provide feedback.

See Cover Letter Samples at careercenter.wustl.edu/samples.