



Résumé & Cover Letter Writing

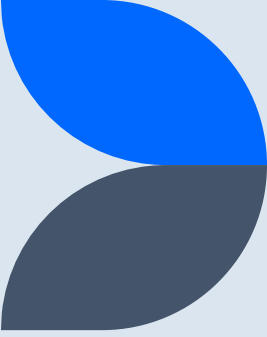
Sarah Sullivan, Career Advisor

Career and Planning Services (CAPS)



Agenda

- Introduction to CAPS
- What is a résumé?
- Format
- Content
- Cover letters
- Tailoring your application
- Q&A



Introduction to CAPS

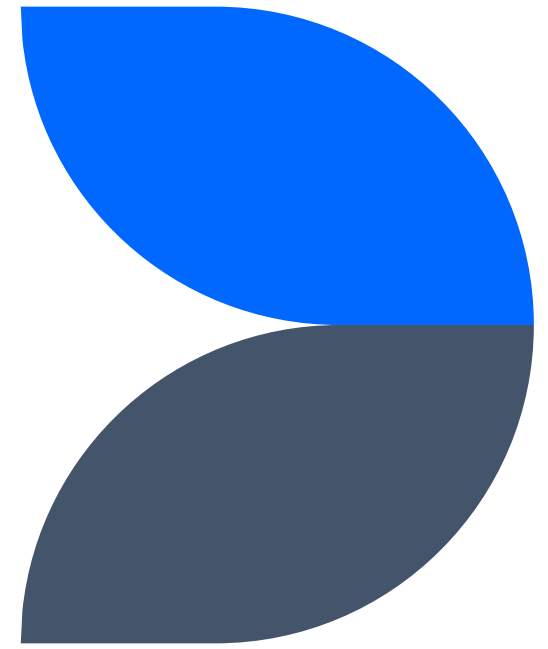
- [Career advising and career counselling](#)
- [Job bank](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Career resources](#)

Book an appointment!

Call us at 514-848-2424 ext. 7345 or visit us at H-745

www.concordia.ca/caps

**What is a
résumé?**



What is a résumé?

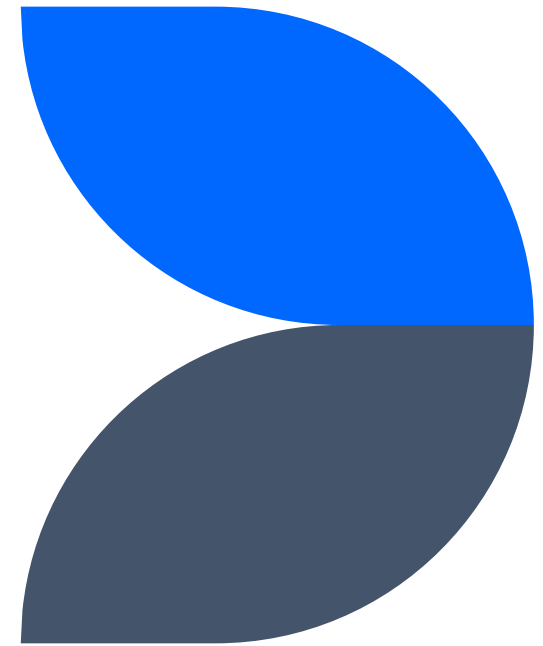
A résumé is a tool used in the job search process.

The purpose of a résumé is to highlight your experience, education, and skillset to an employer.

When applying to a specific position, your goal is to show the employer how your experience, education, and skillset are relevant to their needs.

Résumé format

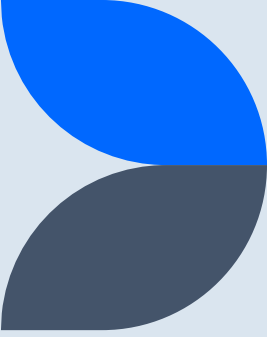
The chronological résumé



The chronological résumé

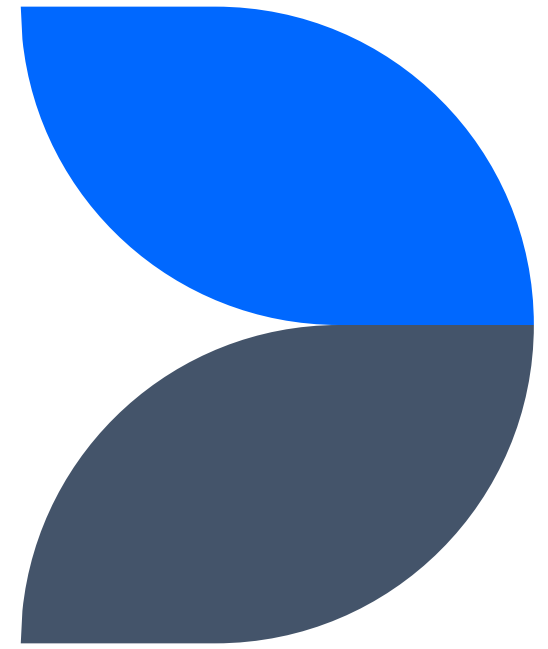
- **Length:** 1-2 pages
- **Font size/style:** 11pt, Arial, Times New Roman, Calibri, Helvetica
- **Experience:** should be listed in reverse-chronological order and include bullet-point descriptions
- **Dates:** should line up on the right side of the page





The chronological résumé – example

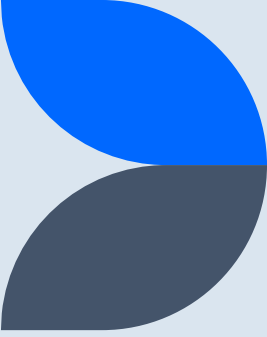
Résumé content



Résumé sections

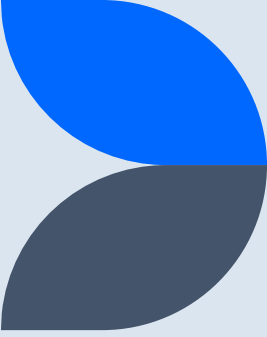
- **Contact information**
- **Education and training**
- **Work experience**
- **Projects**
- **Extra-curricular and volunteer work**
- **Technical and language skills**
- **Hobbies and interests**

Contact information



- Name
- Location (no address, only city and province/country)
- Email address (professional – name only)
- Phone number
- LinkedIn url
- Personal website, online portfolio

Contact information – example

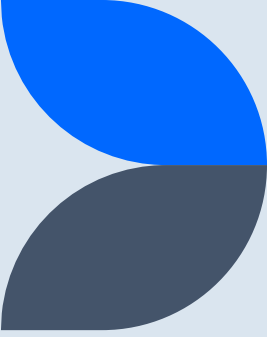


Sarah Sullivan

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Montreal, QC

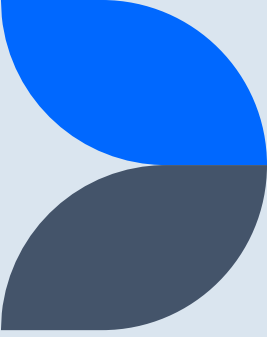
514-848-2424



Education and training

- Degree type (e.g., Bachelor of Engineering, Bachelor of Computer Science)
- Major or program (e.g., Mechanical Engineering, Information Systems Security)
- Institution (e.g., Concordia University)
- Location (e.g., Montreal, QC)
- Date (use "Expected [YEAR]" if currently a student)
- Optional: GPA, relevant courses, scholarships and awards

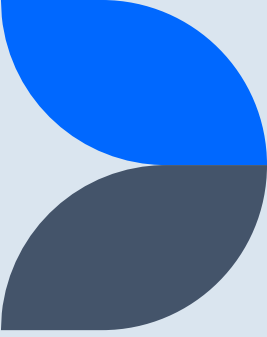
Other training: workshops, training courses, professional development, certifications – include in **Additional Training and Certifications** section



Education - example

Bachelor of Engineering, Aerospace Engineering Expected May 2023
Concordia University, Montreal, QC

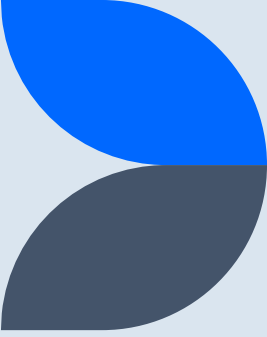
- GPA: 3.6
- Dean's List: 2020 & 2021
- Relevant courses: Avionics and Aerospace Systems, Aerodynamics and Propulsion



Experience

- List in reverse-chronological order
- Include your **title**, the **name of the organization**, the **location**, and the **dates** you held the position
- Dates on the right – be consistent with how you format
- **Headings used:**
 - Work Experience/Professional Experience
 - Career-related Experience and Other Work Experience
 - Academic Projects/Relevant Projects
 - Extra-curricular Experience/Volunteer Experience/Community Involvement

Example – Work Experience



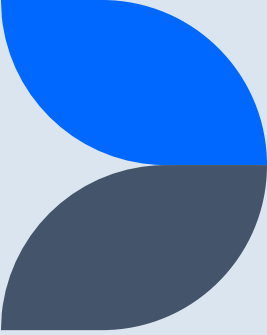
Store Clerk

2020–Present

Couche-Tard, Montreal, QC

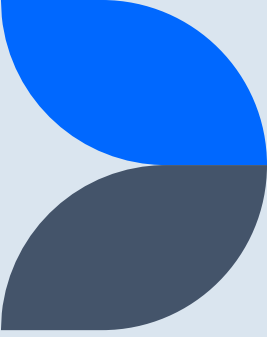
- Patiently assist customers locate items and answer questions about products in a friendly manner, yielding a high client return rate
- Operate cash register serving over 70 customers per day, carefully calculate sales and prepare bank deposits

Experience – Academic Project



Robotic Arm for Lunar Exploration (Capstone project), Concordia University

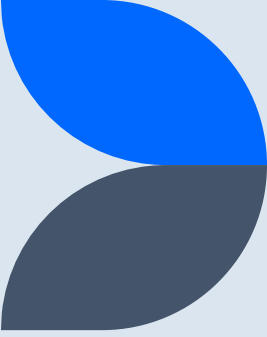
- Collaborated with 6 students to create a prototypical mechanical robotic arm for use on rovers in lunar environments under Canadian Space Agency's (CSA) supervision
- Defined low-level feature requirements for system compliance and design feasibility based on CSA's system requirements
- Designed components and drivetrain for assembly using SolidWorks
- Assessed prototype's Technology Readiness Level (TRL), obtaining level 4 partially



Skills

- **Languages:** list all the languages you know and include an adjective that reflects your fluency level
- **Computer and Technical:** list all relevant software, programming languages, and other technical skills relevant to your search

***Transferrable skills:** it is best to incorporate these into the descriptions of your experience instead of listing in a skills section. Including them as part of your descriptions gives more context to the reader.



Hobbies & interests

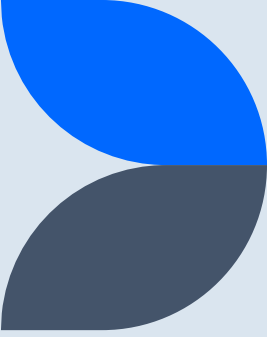
- **Optional** – some recruiters do not pay attention to this section, while others use this section as ice breaker material during an initial interview
- Time invested
- Specific
- Career-related

Describing your experience

Your **work**, **volunteer**, **extra-curricular**, and **projects** sections all require bullet point descriptions that speak to your skills and abilities.

- Include 3-4 bullet points
- Start with action verbs
- Highlight skills and achievements, including both technical skills and transferrable skills
- Use the PAR method to structure your bullet points





The PAR Method

PAR stands for **problem**, **action**, **result**.

Problem: work task/responsibility

Action: how you addressed the problem

Result: outcome of the action

Example:

Patiently assisted an average of 30 customers in finding items and providing recommendations, **generating 2K of additional revenue**.

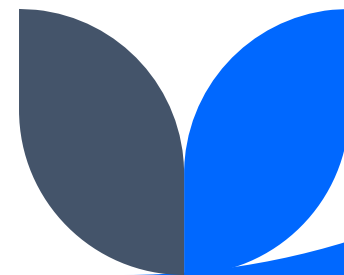
Profile

What is it?

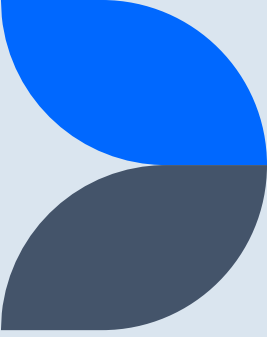
- Highlights your most relevant experience, technical skills/knowledge, and soft skills.
- 3-6 bullet points or a very short paragraph (around 3 lines).

When do I use one?

- Summarize extensive experience
- Bring focus to your resume if your experience is varied



Profile – examples



Bullet points:

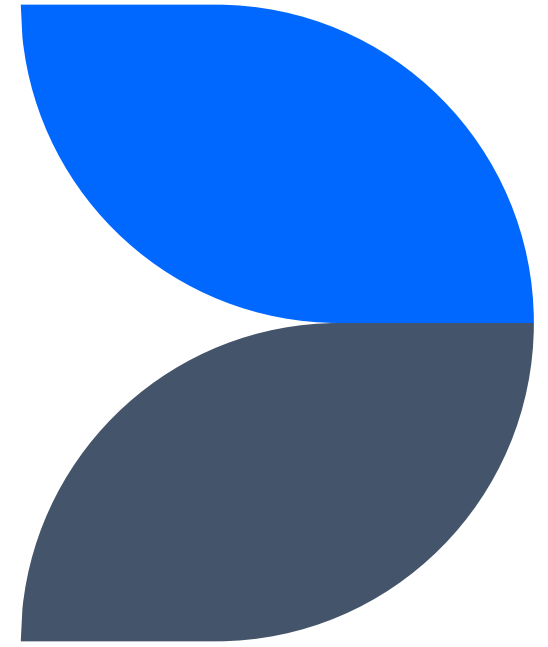
PROFILE

- Experience working in a laboratory setting assisting professionals and conducting research
- Knowledge of various laboratory techniques such as titration, spectrophotometry, chromatography, and polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis
- Familiar in the collection and analysis of data
- Team-oriented with experience leading and working in groups in both academic and employment settings
- Excellent communication skills with fluency in English, French, and Arabic

Paragraph:

Enthusiastic Mechanical Engineering graduate student with over 3 years of experience in the Aerospace industry. Skilled in AutoCAD, Matlab, and C++. Highly motivated with superior analytical, organizational, and communication skills.

Cover letters



Why write a cover letter?

- Demonstrate interest
- Expand on information from your résumé
- State why and how you would be an asset to an organization



Types of cover letters

Application
cover letter

When responding to
a job posting

Referral
cover letter

When an
acquaintance tells
you about a position

Prospecting
cover letter

When inquiring
about possible
opportunities that
may not be
advertised

Elements of a cover letter

1st Element – Introduction (1 paragraph)

- State the title of the position you are applying for
- Express why you are interested in this organization
- Provide a general statement on how you match the qualifications

2nd Element – Why you? (1-3 paragraphs)

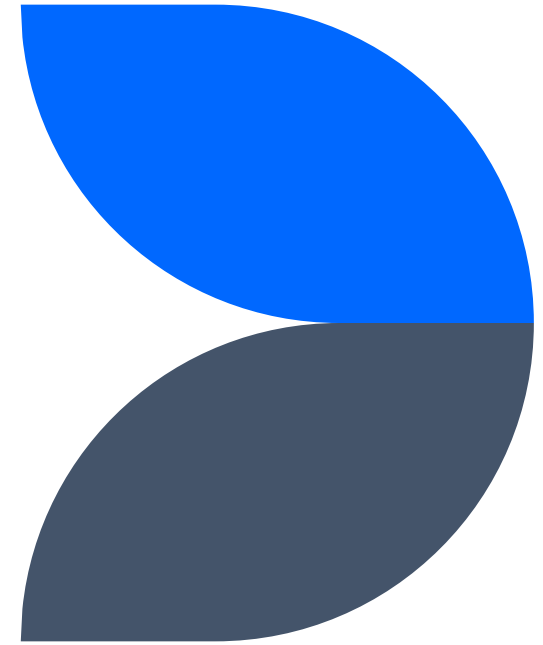
- Demonstrate knowledge of key skills and experience needed for the job
- Share the relevance of your education, training, and projects
- Give concrete examples of previous experience that is relevant to the job

3rd Element – Let's get together (1 paragraph)

- Restate your interest in the position
- Request an interview
- Thank the reader

Tailoring your résumé and cover letter

Your résumé and cover letter are not static documents – they should always be tailored to your target job.



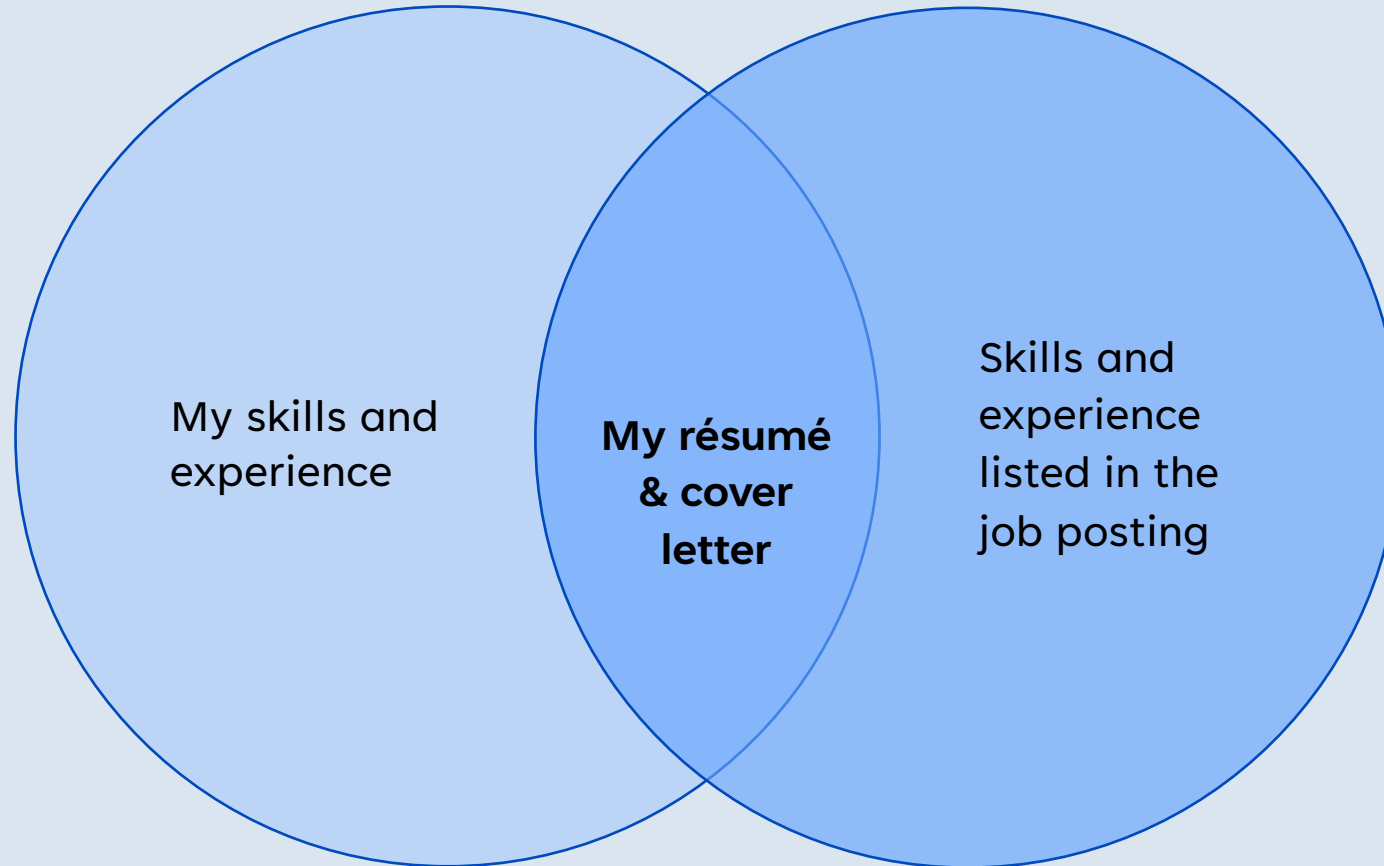
Analyse the job posting

- Based on the **description** of the role, what skills do you think would be important?
- What skills and experience are listed as **requirements**?
- What **keywords** are used in the job posting? Can you incorporate these into your résumé?

Good to know...

When you apply to a job online, the company is likely using **ATS software**. This software assesses your application based on the number of **keywords that match their job posting**.

Choose what to highlight



Questions?

Thank you

Sarah Sullivan, Career Advisor

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