# What is a Resume?

Resumes are marketing documents. They aren't your life or work history. They aren't required to show your failures and short coming. Their purpose is to quickly tell a recruiter/hiring manager/college/counselor that you have the qualifications they are looking for.

# What do I include?

When writing a resume, you should include any information that would let someone know that you are capable. Things that you should list include your professional contact information, education, work experience, clubs or activities, and skills. The order in which you list these things depends on what is most import to showcase first.

# What kind of skills do I have?

Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills- Skill sets include both hard skills and soft skills. Hard skills are teachable abilities or skills that can be quantified. These include being proficient in a computer program or playing an instrument. Soft skills are subjective interpersonal skills that are much harder to quantify. Soft skills you might possess include being cooperative, being able to delegate, and flexible. Both types of skills may be included on a resume and in cover letters.

# What should I leave out?

A resume is a concise overview of your experience; emphasis on concise. Make sure that you are not overcrowding your resume with extra information. Leave out the following items:

* Paragraphs- Write in short sentences or bullet points.
* Incorrect information- Do not lie on your resume. Even if you think that no one will check up on it. They may not call the school to make sure you were in Future Astronauts of the Americas, but they may ask you about it in an interview.
* Too Much Information- No birthdate, religion, hobbies, weight, social security number, marital status, links to Facebook or personal blogs, children, sexual orientation or life mission statements.
* Anything that looks bad- If you are not in any clubs or sports, leave that section off. If your GPA is lower than the current gas prices, just leave it off. If they truly need to know, they can ask. This also includes your email address if it is not professional sounding.
* Grammatical and Spelling Errors- Double check and then double check again. Make sure that you have not made any errors. Spell check will only alert you if the word is spelled wrong, not if you used the wrong word. Also, be consistent. If you write the club name: 9th-12th, make sure you follow your own pattern for each club you belong to.

# The Next Step

Think back and write down everything that you have done and keep updating it. From the lead role in the musical freshmen year to the pet sitting you did last spring break, everything you do is experience. You can decide later to leave it out if it isn’t relevant. There are hundreds of online resources and templates to help you produce a professional resume. Once you have your information inputted, it is much easier to update an electronic copy.