

Course Name- Complete guide for campus interviews: Step by step preparation for Internships and Full-time jobs

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Customizing resume

Hello everyone, we'll talk about resume in this session today. We'll cover details of what is it which recruiters look for from a resume, what you can do to get your resume in perfect shape and that's the plan for today's session. We'll begin with a bunch of topics which is that a recruiter's perspective, right. So you move away from what you write on your resume, how awesome you are, looking at things from a very different point of view which is how do recruiters look at your resume, what do they look for, what do they value so that then you can learn from their experience and optimize your resume accordingly. We'll share an example of what a good resume would look like so that you know what I'm talking about. We'll talk about some action verbs which can pick up your resume and make it look powerful.

We'll also talk about some common mistakes which students make in their resumes. So with this, you get a good feel of what resumes are. And it doesn't matter if you're a student, whether you're somebody looking for jobs with multiple years of work experience. Everybody goes through the same problems, go through the same issues when it comes to making solid resumes and I am sure everyone is going to learn from this slide.

So, firstly what do recruiters want when they look at resumes? Take a step back, go to the recruiter's perspective. So, I have been a recruiter for a very long time, talked to tens of thousands of students, recruited tens of thousands of students. So number one problem for a recruiter is that there are lots and lots of applicants for every job position, right? So ideally, a hiring manager who's a person who puts up the job description or JD, they want to select one person for the job, right? But then when you put up that job posting on the career website, there are lots of applicants. You're not the only person applying for the job. So many other people apply.

Typically, around 500 students used to apply for a job, maybe three years back. But right now, in 2024, there are approximately 1,000 to 3,000 people applying for any job in any company portal. There's a deluge of applicants, just too many applicants. So what this means is that the hiring manager is going to tell the recruiter, the recruiter is a person who is in charge of shortlisting the resumes. They're trying to bring the numbers down from 3,000 to the final 1%, right? So the recruiting manager tells the recruiter, shorten it to the top 20 applicants.

So if you see from this point of view, the recruiter has to screen from 3,000 to top 20. How are they going to do it? They cannot spend hours reading one resume. It's just impossible. They cannot even spend minutes reading a resume. It's impossible.

So they're going to spend seconds reading a resume. So that's what's happening right now. So a recruiter is going to look at a resume for maybe five seconds, maybe seven seconds. They're going to make up their mind whether they want to take it forward or not. This process is all about elimination.

They're not looking to select you, right, because they want to bring it down to a manageable number. They're trying to just kick out as many people as possible. So bring it down to a number which is manageable. It is not about how great you are or how awesome you are. In many big companies, for example, if you take the FAMG companies, the Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, and Google of the world, even in the past, lots of great candidates were not able to get into these companies.

It is not that they are not good enough, it just meant that there are just too many applicants, recruiters cannot give due justice to every single applicant. So, the trick for you is, if you are part of the 1000 to 3000 applicants, how do you get noticed? So, how do you avoid making mistakes? How do you avoid getting eliminated? So, that is what you are going to delve deeper into. Let us look at this, when you write a solid resume, what are some of the things expected? So, step 1, what is it you have to be doing? First thing first, you have to write a customized resume for that company, for that job. As an example, if you are getting into the campus recruiting process, Google has multiple jobs. One could be a software engineer, one could be a marketing analyst, one could be a data analytics engineer.

You have to create a different resume for each one of these jobs, even though you're applying for the same company. So JD of that company is something you have to look at. And you have to use a different resume for every single job. Do not use one resume for every company out there or every job within that company. That's a big mistake.

So customize. If you customize, you will have a much better chance of getting into companies. The second thing is that whatever skills are defined in the job description has to be reflected on your resume. If possible, try to use the same words, if not, try to make it look as similar as possible. If there is a closer match, then there is a higher chance of your resume being selected. This happens in two ways.

So, one is that there is something called automatic tracking system, which is called ATS within a company, which is a software designed to screen resumes based on job description. The more the match between you and the skills, the greater the chance that ATS is going to pick up your resume and send it to the recruiter. The second thing is when the recruiter reads your resume, right, after it's screened through ATS, the recruiter should also find a match between your resume and the job description skills. And the more the match, the more the same words on both, yes, then there's a higher chance of finding you. Third thing is try to make sure that you have like a one-page resume as much as possible.

Do not make it two pages or three pages. As a student and with anyone with less than say 10 years of work experience, I highly recommend that you only have a one-page resume. Shorten it as much as possible. It's not easy. You'll have to put some effort on it.

But if you spend enough time, you can shorten it to one page. Whatever additional stuff out there, you can always put it on your LinkedIn profile. So it's not necessary that you remove it completely. Just put that on your LinkedIn profile.

Let it be there. Most recruiters look at both your resume and LinkedIn profile. So nobody's going to miss out on what you did. But make your resume as compact as possible. The other point I would also want to reflect on is at the top of your resume, try to provide a clear objective in terms of what is it you're looking for. So many recruiters struggle to understand what job are

you applying for? What role do you want? What are your skills? I for example always read the objective very clearly and it should go something like this.

I am applying for a job in data analytics at Microsoft to leverage my skills in XYZ and that XYZ should be similar to what is listed in the job description. The skills as defined in the job description. This is impressive. Every recruiter, even if they do not read anything else in the resume, they'll definitely read the objective. So that's two lines to make a very big impact on the recruiter.

So make sure that you get that done really well. When you write about what you did in a project, what you did in an internship, what you did in terms of work experience, try to capture it in terms of bullets. Make sure it's written in the star format and we'll talk about what the star format is later. It's like situation, tasks, actions and results. So when you write about it, you always begin with something called action verb.

You begin with developed software program. The word developed is important, it's a verb and it denotes that you've done something. So you can say, for example, analyze a recruiting software system using data points from 10 different sources. So you begin with the word analyzed. That's a very powerful action word. You can say spearheaded a new project to solve problems in X, Y, Z.

So spearheaded becomes an action verb. So begin with the verb. And that's how you write a bullet point. And also link it to some metric. You also want to talk about achievements, not just in terms of actions, but in terms of what did you.

.. What did they result in at the end of the day? What impact did it make? So there is a metric attached to either a productivity increase, an efficiency increase, cost savings, there has to be a metric. Try to capture metrics in your bullet points and that makes it look very powerful. Try not to have mistakes anywhere, avoid the very common mistakes, we will discuss some of them. Your resume should be foolproof with not a single error. That's the only way you're going to get noticed by some of the big companies.

Even the smallest mistakes can get your resume eliminated. OK, step two in terms of optimizing your resume. What you have to do is don't use too much of flowery language.

Stick to facts. Stick to numbers. Let the metrics do the talking. So using facts and figures is very important. So for example, instead of saying that you you made cost saving, the earlier cost for that project was a number x and then you brought it down by 50%, just say that you had a cost savings of 50%, right. So that and if you define the problem really well, you do not need to spend too much words in terms of describing the problem, just a simple word, a simple percentage number can show exactly what you did. For example, if you discovered say 3 bugs in a certain software program, right.

Do not say I discovered 3 bugs in a software program. That is not the way you want to present yourself. You want to talk about what the number of bugs you discovered earlier was. For example, if there is one bug discovered by the software engineers earlier and you discovered 3 bugs in the same software program, you can say that. there was a 200 percent increase in the number of bugs which is discovered.

So, 1 to 3 as a number does not seem big, but when you translate that to percentage increase or decrease, it looks much better. So, you want to say you are more productive, more efficient and use numbers to do the talking for you. Likewise, make sure the resume is easy to read and follow. Balance the white space accordingly. So, it should look very neat, clean, cleanly aligned, same font being used everywhere, consistent spacing, right.

There should not be too much bold, italics, underline and so on. Try to minimize it. Just keep to like regular font. Maybe overall in your resume, there should not be more than two fonts as much as possible.

Try to stick to the same format everywhere. Try to have minimal boldings or underlinings. You want to minimize these things as much as possible. Where you want to capitalize, watch carefully. Make sure that whatever you do in one place is captured everywhere else. And we'll show you some examples to make sure that you folks understand.

Always list things, especially work experience in terms of the reverse chronological order, which means that whatever you did most recently comes at the top, whatever you did much earlier comes right at the bottom. For example, if you won, say, International Math Olympiad after your high school, that should not come at the top, it should come right at the bottom. You talk about what you did in college first, right, or university first. Finally, you talk about what other things you achieved. So again, make sure that the right chronology is used in terms of presenting your resume.

Make sure that you don't have too many abbreviations on your resume. What I mean by abbreviations is that typically the person reading your resume is gonna be somebody from human resources. Many human resources people are not from engineering and they tend to be from arts backgrounds, humanities backgrounds. So even a non-engineer should be able to make perfect sense of a resume. So, if you are using words like for example, optimization techniques and all that, Markov optimization techniques and all that, do not just say MOT, Markov optimization technique, expand that MOT to say it is Markov optimization technique.

Likewise, you want to make sure that all abbreviations are expanded, so that people can understand. So in mechanical engineering, there is a piece of work which involves decreasing cycle time, right? Cycle time is typically called CT in production engineering language. But the word CT will not make sense to any person outside production engineering. So don't just mention CT, expand it as cycle time so that a person who's also not from a production background can understand. This is something which a lot of folks forget all the time, which is that do a spell check as much as possible.

I mean, even if you think you have reviewed a resume, go to Microsoft Word, do a spell check. Go to Grammarly, ask it to identify mistakes because people always make mistakes and it skips their attention all the time. Even the best prepared resumes can always go wrong. Review with your friends, family, professors after you do your spell check.

They will find errors which you cannot. Sometimes when we create our resumes, we are so much in love with our resumes that we forget that there are certain things which could have been written better, which could have been optimized in a different direction. So give it to your friends, family, your professors, it's fantastic. So get more feedback, that's very important. Talk to maybe your seniors who are right now working.

Talk to them, ask them to review your resume. These are all very good things. I would say that if you have never created a resume in your life, if you are starting off, it takes a lot of time to make it perfect. I would say maybe it takes around 20 to 25 iterations, minimum of 20 iterations are required and you have to put a lot of effort for each one of these iterations. The first time you create your resume at draft one, it is going to take you maybe a couple of hours, maybe 5-6 hours to come with draft one. And draft two will also take you a similar amount of hours, like five, six hours.

So overall, I'm saying that this effort of making 20 drafts for your resume could take you many, many dozens of hours in terms of optimizing it. Don't be disappointed. Just go through the motion. Make sure you get it done as much as possible.

And remember, a resume is customized for a company. So you want to make sure that the time you spend is repeated as you keep recreating your resume for different companies. And that's the hard work, right? So when you're applying to a new company, you'll have to change your resume, write different things. You have to do the homework. If you do the homework, the chances of you getting selected in companies is much higher. If you do not do the homework, then yes, you may get rejected much faster.

So what a good resume looks like. I just created something out of scratch, just to show you folks what are some of the things which companies are looking for. So when you look at this resume, I think it's a good, again this is a fake resume, but I just created this to give you a sense of what companies want. So your name should be at the top very clearly, right, in a different font, in bold and in capital letters, like that's important. I want to see your phone number, I want to see your Gmail ID, I want to see your LinkedIn ID and your location, all listed together.

Your Gmail should look professional. It should capture your name and nothing else. Again, don't use funny words like a crazy cat, crazy dog at gmail.

com. Don't do that. Make it your name. dot something at gmail.com or like my case it would probably be vinod.arvindakshan@gmail.com right that makes it look really professional so in case i'm not able to get vinod.arvindakshan it's already been claimed i can then make it like vinod.

arvindakshan11@gmail.com that's okay right but i can't make it like vinod.arvindakshan_the dog@gmail.com that does not look fine Likewise, when you're looking at, say, a LinkedIn profile, make sure that there's an option in LinkedIn by which you can actually customize your LinkedIn ID. If you don't customize, it will give you a set of random letters at the URL.

Avoid doing that. Make sure that it's customized. You can make it look like your name. In this case, it's LinkedIn.com slash R-A-M-M. Location is important. When you say location for a student going to the campus interview process you put down the location of the university you are based out of you don't need to put the location of where you come from because where you are is in campus companies are coming to campus so if you mention the location you are based out of during college that's fair enough objective should be in the format of seeking a job in this company to build on my skills in XYZ so in this case Ram has mentioned that he has specific skills in problem solving, quantitative analysis and statistics.

So, you basically want to say that whatever the recruiters looking for in the job description is what Ram also brings to the table. So, that way Ram is making a great case for him to get hired

as quickly as possible. Under education, I would expect to see the dates in terms of when they graduated. For example, if there's a month and a year attached to it, I would love to see it.

Use the same format. If you're using 2022, use the same 2022 as the format everywhere. If you use 2024, use it like, or 22, May 22 to June 22 is how you write. Then use 22 as a format for a year, right? Whatever format you use, use it consistently throughout your resume. So I can see that the college is listed very clearly.

It talks about which university, it talks about what is the specialization. All these are very important. The clear bullet points, it talks about like if you are a top ranker, if you have very high grades, you might want to list it right at the top. You might want to talk about some of the courses you have taken. You can also list courses as a separate section, but I would say that you can also list it here. So what courses you have taken is a very good indicator of how much effort you have put in for that specific technical skills you have gained and what have you gained from the program, right? It becomes more clear to the recruiter.

If you have done some really good fantastic work like you climbed the Himalayas, done impressive work, yes, you may mention that, but I actually discourage people from talking about hobbies for a couple of reasons. You folks already have a lot of things to write on your resume. If you keep talking about hobbies, what happens is that your resume quickly runs into two pages. And I really want you to keep it to one page.

So if you have nothing else to write, then maybe you can talk about hobbies. But if you have a lot of things to write, keep hobbies aside. Put that on your LinkedIn profile and instead focus on what work you have done, industrial experience you have, internship experience you have. That's what I want to see. In this case, the industrial experience is listed very clearly.

The person is working in L&T automation. If you look at the bullet points, it begins with action verb. It talks about, again, a powerful verb to begin each bullet point. That's important. It talks about what is the work they did. For example, the softmax regression model, that's a good way in terms of telling me what are some of the technical skills the recruiter is looking for.

It also talks about what was the result in terms of metrics. Decrease wastage by 10%, cost savings of 15 lakhs. These are very powerful ways in terms of helping the recruiter understand what is the impact of your actions. It's not like you just did the internship, did 10 things and went away. So as a recruiter, I want to know, was there any use? Did the 10 actions have any purpose? And that's where the metrics is going to help me understand.

So, everything need not be work experience, right. Even if the person has not had work experience, you can work with professors during the summer. If you have spent time working with the professor, in this case, I have just said that if you have done the project assistantship work, worked on some projects, call it out, right. Say what is the name of the project you worked here, it is statistical process capability analysis. What did you try to achieve? What are the goals set out for you? Try to capture technical language out here, it makes it look powerful. Also you talk about, so what is the end result? In this case it is decreasing the breakdown frequency by 10%.

So this means that you made an impact in the workplace, a very good impact in the workplace. So that's impressive. When I look at these numbers, metrics, I always feel impressed by the candidate, whether it's cost savings of, say, I saved 30 lakhs, I saved 100 lakhs, I saved \$10

million, or I improved efficiency by 20%, I decreased wastage by 10%. In another case, I talked about reducing the overall processing cost by 20%.

It's a cost saving. Fantastic, right? The percentages, the numbers, they mean a lot. Try to convert your work to a metric. It is not always possible, but I am telling you that I worked with thousands of students and never seen even one case where if you have really done something, there will always be a metric attached to it. If you enter the workforce, every job you do will have to be rated by your manager in terms of metrics. And in the same way, when you do any work in college, try to make sure there's a metric linked to it.

And if you look deeply enough, you should have created a change in the project. Like if you did a project and made no change, then you did not do anything in the project. You should have done something. It should have improved it in some way. Try to capture that improvement in some way as a metric.

That's what you've got to capture in your resume. If you have done none of this work, neither industrial experience, neither working with professors, even if you have worked with a non-profit, we have worked on volunteer work, capture that. It could be leadership work, it could be, for example, COVID relief work, working with low-income families, capture that as much as possible. Skills and certifications, put it all together, put it at the bottom so easy to read. I have not asked you to write about hobbies here because again my feeling is that so much you write that hobbies is probably last preference.

You want to keep it as job focused as possible. Unless you are like I am a chess champion, I have won the international chess Olympiad and so on or you have climbed Mount Everest. Those things are great as hobbies. But most people are not doing fantastic hobbies, right. In that case, I would strongly recommend that If you have space ride hobbies, if not I would say skip it.

So we talked about action verbs. So this is a great way for you to improve your resume. So the first draft you create for your resume, you are going to probably use words like did, provided, conducted, and so on, right? But these are not powerful words. So look at this list of words. There are two slides, this slide and the next slide. It's all about using the right word to make your word look even more powerful than it is.

Instead of saying managed some work, you can say spearheaded and did some work. You can use a word synthesized instead of saying did. For example, instead of using a word like again did, you can say I collaborated, I authored. There's just a lot of different words you can use to convey the same meaning. Pick the most powerful word from this list and use that to improve your resume.

So that's the idea of action verbs. So I've given you a list of action verbs here and in this next slide here. Again, in terms of, if you have done some quantitative work, creative work, use the right verbs which help convey a positive impression. Let us move on to common mistakes.

I think this is, I am nearing the end of my presentation. So, we got around maybe two slides left. Okay, so we talked a lot about what students should do, what the job seekers should do. Now let's ask, okay, when I as a recruiter, when I'm looking at resumes, what am I looking for, right? Like how am I going to throw out resumes? How do I eliminate resumes? What am I looking forward, which makes me think that I'm not going to go forward, right? Let's look at

that one by one. So level one, very, very basic stuff, right? You just cannot make any mistakes here. No spelling mistakes, no grammatical mistakes, right? So those things should not be happening.

And then you don't want to have any like missing email information or crazy emails. We talked about that earlier. Unprofessional email IDs, strict no. Do not put your picture, ideally, I mean, there are situations in campus recruiting where your campus recruiting officer will ask you to put pictures, so that's fine, right. When you're doing campus recruiting is a different conversation, I'm not talking about that. But when you come to the open market and apply for jobs, there are a bunch of things which recruiters do not want from you.

For example, you talking about your age, gender, date of birth, religion, your parents' name, your complete address, your nationality, providing references, these things are absolutely not necessary. Sometimes when people put their picture, they put their parents' name and all that, I know that this person has no understanding of the recruiting process. I will immediately reject this person saying this person is not going to be a fit for my company. Because the expectation is very high. Like when you are writing a solid resume, you are going to be competing with the best of the best in the industry.

You cannot afford to make such mistakes. So you cannot put your photograph, you cannot put your age, gender, date of birth. These things are absolutely not necessary. Another rookie mistake, an entry level mistake which a lot of people make is using the word I on the resume. Instead of beginning with action verb, instead of saying developed, supervised and so on, they would begin by saying I did so and so work, right? Or I did 10 lectures on this topic.

Don't use the word I did 10 lectures on the topic. Just begin with saying spearheaded 10 lectures on this topic, right? That's a good way to communicate the information. So don't begin, avoid using the word I on your resume. It makes it look really bad. That's a very unprofessional way of putting stuff on your resume.

Again, like I said, customize it for the company and the job posting. Use the language of job description. If you use the same resume for multiple companies, easily findable. Anybody who looks at their resume will know that it's not a match. This person is just copy pasting something without applying their mind. And that's an easy way to get rejected.

Use, again, when you're talking about stuff, right, like there's something called active tense and passive tense. Again, I would say the active tense is very important instead of passive tense. You can do your own research. Check it up a little. I mean, I can't talk about this in a couple of minutes.

Try to use active tense as much as possible and not passive language. Make it easy to read. Make it easy to skim. So another thing which is important is sometimes people lie on their resume. This is something which has been happening a lot more in the last couple of years. And I want to bring it out and have a conversation about this topic.

You cannot lie to a recruiter. It's very easy for them to find out who did the work and who did not do the work. For example, you as a production engineer, if you say that I made \$100 million of savings, It's impossible, right? Nobody can make \$100 million of savings. Even an executive vice president cannot make that much savings in a company, in a huge company with

30, 40 years of work experience. So just be careful of the numbers you use. It should make sense at the end of the day, right? So be thoughtful about what you put on your resume.

Recruiters have seen tens of thousands of resumes. Like, I myself have probably seen around 30,000 to 40,000 resumes in my life so far. So we have a good sense of when people are being honest, when people are not being honest. That's a gut feeling we develop, right? Because if you've got to identify a person within five seconds or six seconds, right, you've got to be very good in doing this work.

And you do that repeatedly, you get better and better. So I would say that don't lie to recruiters. Easy for them to spot lies. And in case you lie, that's not just has consequences for you, it has consequences for the institution you represent. It has consequences for even if, for example, you make a mistake and you think that you somehow fooled the recruiter, if they catch it later, it can have consequences for your juniors.

It can have consequences for your institution. So think about it. Institutions can be blacklisted by companies. You don't want that to happen clearly, right. You don't want to bring a bad reputation for your institution. Do not exaggerate, do not manipulate information. I mean, the terms of like, when you're using the truth, when you're presenting the truth, you can be creative about it, but not indulge in absolute manipulation.

Don't stretch the line. Be thoughtful about how you want to creatively present yourself. Like I gave you the example, right? Somebody having created, having found three software bugs in the program. Instead of, if you want to present that, you can say that I had a 200% increase in the way bugs were found in the computer program. When a person has found, let's say, three bugs compared to, say, one bug. So 200% increase sounds fine because it's creatively representing yourself.

But do not say outright lies like I found 3,000 bugs in the program. That's an outright lie. We have not done that work. And the moment I ask you questions like how did it happen, when did that happen, which way did that happen, you will quickly flounder, you will make mistakes. So recruiters can find mistakes all the time. So do not try to second guess recruiters.

Think about how you want to present yourself positively without lying. So I think that is a challenge for many students. And you will get better the more you keep writing your resumes and rewriting your resumes. Okay folks, we come to the end of today's presentation. Till next time, cheers.