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Personalized Career Solutions For Everyday People

Keywords to Include in Your Higher Ed Resume or CV

When it comes to crafting a resume for higher education positions, it's essential to go beyond just listing your experience and degrees. Think of your resume as a strategic tool that needs to impress both Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) and hiring committees. These committees are on the lookout for specific keywords that highlight your core competencies and align with their institutional priorities.

By incorporating the correct terminology, you can boost your chances of making it to the interview stage. So, get ready to fine-tune your resume and make it not just informative, but compelling! Your future in academia might depend on it.

Why Keywords Matter in Higher Education Resumes

When it comes to landing a position in Higher Education, it's all about speaking the language of academia. Using the right keywords not only shows that you're in tune with the environment, priorities, and culture of your potential employer, but it also gives your resume a competitive edge.

These keywords are essential for navigating the intricate web of Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS), which HR departments use to sift through hundreds of applications. Make sure your application stands out by demonstrating your familiarity with the academic landscape!

Below you will find a list of common categories and keywords you can include on your resume. It's a long list, but it's not all-inclusive. The best place to search for keywords is in your target job description. These are terms I often include in client resumes, and are some good skills to start with, as you create your resume. Good luck!

Top Categories of Keywords for Higher Ed Resumes

Teaching & Learning

Curriculum Development
Instructional Design
Student Engagement
Learning Outcomes
Assessment Strategies
Lesson Planning
Classroom Management
Experiential Learning
Workshop Facilitation

Student Services

Admissions
Bursar
Financial Aid
Registrar
Student Accounts
Billing
Student Records
Contracts

Student Success & Support

Academic Advising
Counseling Center
Health Services
Career Services

Internships
Study Abroad
International Student Services
Student Activities
Event Management
Student Development
Student Conduct / Judicial Affairs
Restorative Justice
Code of Conduct / Honor Code
First-Generation Student Support
Retention Initiatives
At-Risk Students
Inclusive Pedagogy
Tutoring
Communication
Empathy
Relationship Building
Problem Solving
Conflict Resolution
Mediation
Crisis Management
Event Management
Facility Management

Research & Scholarship

Assessment
Benchmarking
Grant Writing
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Sponsored Programs
Research Compliance
Human Subjects
Scholarly Publications (Thesis, Dissertation, Journals, Books, etc.)
Research Collaborations
Data Analysis
Reporting
Conference Presentations
Media Appearances / Media Mentions
Qualitative Research
Quantitative Research
Metrics

Leadership & Administration

Strategic Planning
Annual Reports

Accreditation
Change Management
Program Management
Project Management
Cross-Functional Teams
Committees
Partnerships / Collaborations (Departments, Divisions, Community Organizations, Government, Non-Profits, etc.)
Board of Trustees
Budgets / Budget Administration
Governance
Policy Development
Supervision
Performance Management
Mentoring
Mission & Vision Development
Standards / Standard Operating Procedures / Institutional Effectiveness
Emotional Intelligence
Emergency Response
Recruiting / Recruitment

Advancement & External Relations

Alumni Relations / Alumni Affairs
 Community Outreach
 Corporate Relations
 Development
 Donor Relations
 Fundraising
 Government Relations
 Legal Affairs
 Public Relations
 Regulatory Compliance (ADA, FERPA, Title IX, EEO, etc.)

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)

Inclusive Excellence
 Multicultural Programming
 Equity Initiatives
 Accessibility
 Community Engagement
 Cultural Sensitivity
 Intercultural
 Communication
 Culturally Responsive
 Bias Mitigation
 Employee Resource Groups
 Campus Climate
 Learning Environment
 Work Environment
 Stakeholder Engagement / Stakeholder Relations

Auxiliary & Business Services

Athletics
 Bookstore
 Campus Dining / Food Services
 Catering
 Housing / Residence Life / On-Campus Living
 Marketing
 Public Safety
 Parking
 Recreation / Intramurals
 Document Services / Printing Services
 Purchasing
 Human Resources
 Training / Training & Development
 Facility Management

Technology & Innovation

Learning Management Systems (LMS) - Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle, Etc.
 Online Course Design
 Educational Technology
 Data-Informed Decision Making
 Virtual Learning Environments
 Database Management
 User Experience (UX)
 Dashboard Development
 Social Media Management
 Google Analytics

Common Software and Web Platforms

Microsoft Office - Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SharePoint, Teams, Microsoft 365
 Google Apps (Google Workspace) - Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, Google Drive, Google Classroom
 Design - Canva, Figma, Affinity Designer, Adobe Creative Suite - InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, Acrobat, Acrobat Reader, etc.
 Meeting Platforms - Zoom, Google Meet, WebEx, Skype, GoToMeeting
 Website Development: HTML, WordPress, Squarespace, Wix
 Data Visualization - Tableau, PowerBI, Qlik, Google Looker
 Data Collection and Management - Qualtrics, Access, SurveyMonkey, TypeForm
 CRM: Slate, Salesforce Education Cloud, Ellucian CRM, Element 451, TargetX
 Student Information Systems - Ellucian (Banner, Student), Workday Student, Jenzabar One, Salesforce Education Cloud, PeopleSoft Campus Solutions
 Housing & Residence Life Platforms: StarRez, Entrada, eRezLife, Roompack, Creatrix
 Campus, SpaceBasic

Other Common Keywords

Adaptability
 Analytical Mindset
 Growth Mindset
 Attention to Detail
 Collaboration
 Coordination
 Critical Thinking
 Time Management
 Customer Service
 Teamwork
 Leadership
 Team Leadership
 Operations
 Planning
 Organizing / Organizational Skills
 Continuous Improvement / Process Improvement / Process Optimization
 Alignment
 Negotiation
 Assess(ed)
 Manage(d)
 Create(d)
 Implement(ed)
 Execute(d)
 Develop(ed), Development
 Critical Thinking
 Increased
 Decreased
 Drove / Drive
 Facilitate
 Create(d) / Creative / Creativity
 Networking
 Present(ed) / Presentation(s)
 Flexible
 Work Independently / Minimal Supervision / Self-Directed/ Self-Motivated

How to Use These Keywords Effectively

- Mirror the job posting: Adapt your resume by weaving in the exact terminology used in the description.
- Be authentic: Only use keywords that accurately reflect your skills and experience.
- Show impact: Combine keywords with measurable achievements (e.g., “Led curriculum development initiative that improved retention rates by 12%”).
- Balance ATS and human readers: Don’t overstuff your resume; ensure it reads naturally and flows smoothly.

Final Thoughts

Unlocking the next step in your higher education career begins with the right keywords—your ticket to capturing attention and making your resume shine. By crafting your document with intention and authenticity, you not only meet the expectations of today’s institutions but also showcase the unique value you bring. Approach your job search with confidence, knowing that each strategically chosen word brings you closer to new opportunities and professional growth. You’ve got this!