Tailoring Your Résumé for a Peace Corps Application

Peace Corps personnel read thousands of applications each year, from far more aspiring Volunteers than they can place in the limited number of open positions. Your participation in the Peace Corps Prep program will reflect positively on your desire to serve as a volunteer, and your résumé is the place to highlight that and your other academic, professional, and volunteer experience. Following are tips directly from the Peace Corps that can help you structure your résumé most effectively.

- **Tailor it.** Review the "Required" and "Desired" skills for the volunteer position(s) you're most interested in, and tailor your résumé content and language to highlight the skills mentioned in the posting.

- **Be comprehensive.** Your Peace Corps résumé can be two to three pages long, and should include all relevant professional, volunteer, and leadership experience from college, before college (if applicable), and since college if you have already graduated.

- **Emphasize the relevant parts.** The longest section of your résumé is not necessarily the job where you worked for the longest time. Add more bullets to the jobs where you gained skills you might use in a Peace Corps assignment, even if you didn't spend as long in that position as in some others.

⟫⟫ Read Me!

Your résumé is the most important part of your Peace Corps application!

Spending the time to tailor your résumé to the specific volunteer opening you hope to fill is worth the effort, since this document demonstrates your qualifications in terms of academic, work, and volunteer experience, and serves as a concise way to show that you have what it takes to serve.

In addition to the information in this handout, you should also use the résumé resources available through MSU's Career Services Network.

- ➢ **Include a "Key Qualifications" or "Relevant Skills" section on the first page of your résumé.** This allows the reviewer to see your skill set right away and helps them determine how closely to read the rest of your application package.

- **Quantify your experiences.** Be specific and use numbers to describe your experiences. Include the number of hours you worked/volunteered (e.g., full time, 10 hrs./wk.), the specific field or category (e.g., after-school English 3rd grade tutoring, organic permaculture farming on a 5-acre field), the number of individuals you supervised or worked with (e.g., one-on-one, supervised a group of 20), their ages, etc.

- **Include certifications.** Be sure to list all certifications, especially ones that are relevant for your proposed sector. For example, aspiring Education volunteers should be sure to list any TEFL certifications; Health applicants should list first aid and CPR or nurse assistant training; Youth in Development applicants might include lifeguard training or early childhood certification.
  - ➢ **Include Peace Corps Prep in your list of certifications!**

- **Highlight language training.** Indicate what languages you have a background in, how many semesters in college you have taken in each, how many years in high school, and/or your fluency level independent of coursework. If you lived or taught abroad in a foreign language, note that as well.

- **Keep it updated.** If you want to improve your résumé to better highlight your qualifications, or if you gain skills after you apply, simply upload a new version by going to your portal on the Peace Corps application page.

> **》》 Read Me!**
>
> *The four things Peace Corps reviewers are looking for on your résumé are:*
>
> - *Community service and volunteering*
> - *Leadership experience*
> - *Cross-cultural experience*
> - *Sector-specific skills*
>
> *It's easy to see how Peace Corps Prep is helping you track and quantify these important areas so your résumé stands out!*

From a Peace Corps Recruiter:

Include on Your Résumé	Do NOT Include on Your Résumé
• Positions held (including dates month/year) • Experiences that demonstrate meeting the required/desired skills • Education (with graduation or expected graduation date) • Language proficiency • Other education/accomplishments as they pertain to the position	• Work experiences you want or plan to do in the future • Skills/experience you want to gain • Objective/summary that is not focused for the position • Social security number • Date of birth • Private or health matters • Photos • Physical characteristics

Source: https://www.peacecorps.gov/stories/does-my-resume-matter-when-i-apply-to-the-peace-corps/

Experiences to Include on Your Peace Corps Résumé

A variety of different kinds of experience can relate to your chosen sector, so remember to think outside the box! Below are some ideas to get you thinking about the types of relevant experience you might want to include for each sector.

Education Résumé

- Teaching or tutoring in English, world languages, and other subject areas
- University teaching
- Special education
- Primary and Secondary school teaching
- After school programs
- Camp counseling
- Community programming
- TEFL certification

Health Résumé

- Health education or public health outreach
- Direct patient care (hospital, clinic, or hospice care)
- Medical certifications (e.g., RN, EMT, CPR)
- HIV/AIDS or sexual health education
- Malaria education
- Maternal health/family planning
- Nutrition education

Environment Résumé

- Environmental education with youth or adults
- Natural resource management, watershed management, and conservation efforts
- Sustainable agriculture and food security
- Gardening and farming
- Forestry, tree planting and care

Agriculture Résumé

- Gardening and farming
- Harvesting and storing foods and seed preservation
- Management of soil fertility
- Working with cattle, pigs, poultry, sheep, goats, fish, bees, or other animals
- Food security
- Sustainable agriculture methods

Youth in Development Résumé

- Social work and counseling
- Professional volunteer or paid experience working with at-risk youth and their parents
- Working with youth to promote life skills, leadership, literacy, parenting skills, HIV/AIDS prevention, sex education, health, small business development, and experiential education
- Camp counseling

Community Economic Development Résumé

- Volunteer and paid positions with non-profits, NGOs, and community service organizations
- Grant writing and fundraising
- Community organizing
- Business management, budgeting, and marketing
- Information technology

Above category tips adapted from: https://career.virginia.edu/peace-corps

---