

From Graduate Training to Career Impact

Resumes, interviews & authentic confidence for health and biomedical careers

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Today's roadmap

1 • Hiring landscape

How screening actually works

2 • Resume strategy

Clean format + evidence of impact

3 • Interview strategy

Clear stories + confident delivery

4 • Action plan

Audit, practice, Q&A

The hiring funnel is a translation problem

- Your degree is evidence of capability — not a job description
- Screening looks for role-relevant signals: skills, scope, outcomes, judgment
- Different paths reward different evidence: industry $\neq$ postdoc $\neq$ healthcare leadership
- Your job: make the match obvious, quickly

Academic language

“Conducted lab test and analyzed samples”

Employer language

“Generated reproducible data to support...”

Leadership language

“Improved workflow / access / quality by...”

ATS first. Human second. Both need clarity.

ATS needs

- Standard headings
- Recognizable keywords
- Readable text order
- Correct file type

Human needs

- Fast hierarchy
- Relevant evidence
- Strong first words
- Low cognitive load

Both dislike

- Graphics as data
- Skill bars
- Dense columns
- Keyword stuffing

Design goal: make the right information impossible to miss.

Resume or CV? Choose for the decision-maker

Resume • selective

Usually 1–2 pages
Tailored to a specific role
Prioritizes relevant impact
Common for industry, consulting, healthcare operations, many clinical research roles

Academic CV • comprehensive

Multi-page by design
Scholarship + academic record
Publications, presentations, grants, teaching, service
Expected for faculty/postdoc and many academic applications

Simple wins: the clean-resume standard

- Single-column structure for maximum portability
- 10–12 pt readable body font; consistent spacing
- Standard headings: Education • Experience • Research • Skills
- Use bold strategically — not decoratively
- Keep contact information in the document body
- Follow the employer's requested file format

DELETE

Skill bars • headshots • logos • decorative icons

QUESTION

Tables • text boxes • headers/footers • multiple columns

KEEP

Whitespace • alignment • hierarchy • consistency

Build hierarchy around the role you want

Early graduate student

- Education
- Research / relevant experience
- Technical skills
- Leadership / service
- Selected presentations

Industry pivot

- Targeted summary (optional)
- Relevant experience
- Projects / research
- Technical + data skills
- Education

Academic path

- Education
- Research appointments
- Publications
- Presentations
- Teaching / mentoring
- Grants / awards

Stop listing duties. Start proving value.

Weak

"Responsible for running ELISA labs and maintaining lab records."

Weak

"Helped with patient recruitment for clinical study."

Stronger

"Standardized ELISA workflow across 3 study cohorts, reducing repeat runs and improving consistency of downstream analysis."

Stronger

"Coordinated screening and recruitment for a prospective study, maintaining protocol-compliant documentation and supporting enrollment targets."

A bullet should answer: What did you change, improve, produce, solve, or enable?

The XYZ bullet: impact → evidence → method

X • Accomplished

What changed?
What did you deliver?
What problem did you solve?

Y • Measured by

Quantity
Quality
Time
Scale
Reach
Accuracy

Z • By doing

Method
Technique
Analysis
Leadership
Collaboration

“Accomplished [X], as measured by [Y], by doing [Z].”

Use verbs that reveal your level of contribution

Created

designed • developed • built •
established

Improved

optimized • streamlined • reduced •
increased

Analyzed

modeled • evaluated • validated •
interpreted

Led

coordinated • mentored • implemented
• directed

Communicated

presented • synthesized • translated •
advised

Keywords: mirror the role, not the buzzwords

- Mine the posting: repeated skills, tools, methods, credentials, responsibilities
- Use the employer's language when it truthfully matches your experience
- Put critical keywords inside evidence — not only in a Skills list
- Spell out important acronyms at least once when useful
- Tailor the top third of page 1 for each serious application

Example: Clinical Scientist

Posting says:

- protocol development
- cross-functional teams
- data interpretation
- regulatory documents

Your resume should show where you actually did those things.

Confidence is evidence, not volume

Imposter voice

"I'm just a student."
"I only helped."
"I don't have industry experience."

Evidence voice

"I have done X."
"I learned Y."
"My contribution was Z."

Growth voice

"I haven't done that exact task yet;
here is the closest evidence and how I
would ramp."

“Tell me about yourself” = present → proof → direction

1 • Present

Who are you professionally?
What problem space do you work in?

2 • Proof

2–3 relevant experiences
Skills + outcomes

3 • Direction

Why this role?
Why this next step?

Target: ~60–90 seconds. Curated, not autobiographical.

STAR: make your answer easy to follow



Aim for 1–2 minutes. Spend most of the time on Action + Result.

Build a story bank — don't memorize 25 answers

Failure / setback

How you respond under pressure

Conflict

Communication + judgment

Leadership

Influence without title

Ambiguity

How you make decisions

Learning

Speed + adaptability

Impact

Your strongest measurable result

Technical questions: show your reasoning, not just recall

- Clarify the problem before solving it
- State assumptions
- Explain your decision path
- Name tradeoffs and quality checks
- Say what you would verify if uncertain
- Connect technical choices to patient, scientific, operational, or business impact

Useful phrase

"My first step would be to confirm _____. Then I'd compare _____. The main risk I'd want to control is _____. I'd know the approach is working if _____."

Ask questions that reveal how the work actually works

- What would excellent performance look like at 6 and 12 months?
- What are the hardest problems this person will inherit?
- How are scientific/clinical priorities decided when data are ambiguous?
- How does this team collaborate across functions or disciplines?
- What distinguishes people who thrive here from people who struggle?
- For academic roles: how are mentorship, independence and authorship handled?

Your 5-point pre-send / pre-interview audit

-  **Target** Can someone tell what role I'm pursuing?
-  **Signal** Is the strongest evidence in the top third?
-  **Impact** Do bullets show outcomes, scale or purpose?
-  **Match** Did I use the posting's truthful keywords?
-  **Proof** Can I tell 6–8 STAR stories that support this resume?

Your next 48 hours

Rewrite 3 bullets

Duty → impact + evidence + method

Build 6 STAR stories

Failure · conflict · leadership ·
ambiguity · learning · impact

Practice out loud

60–90 sec intro + 2-minute stories

Confidence grows when your claims are specific, true, and practiced.

Q&A + live coaching

Resume clinic

Give me a duty-style bullet.
We'll turn it into evidence.

Interview clinic

Give me a hard question.
We'll build a STAR response.

Career translation

Give me an academic task.
We'll translate it for your target role.

Selected current references

- Indeed Career Guide (2026): ATS-friendly resumes — standard headings, simple formatting, keyword optimization; avoid graphics/tables/columns.
- Indeed Career Guide (2026): STAR interview response technique — keep Situation/Task concise; emphasize Action and Result.
- Google Careers resume-writing materials: "Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y] by doing [Z]" impact framework.
- Syracuse University iSchool Career Services: Action + Project + Result and XYZ accomplishment formats.