

SkillsUSA – NLSC Competition Resume Guide

General Information

All NLSC competitors must create and submit online a **one-page single sided** resume*. This guide outlines NLSC competition resume best practices. Be consistent in usage of all items listed. The purpose of the resume is to leave a positive, professional presence.

- Margins – For most resumes, the recommended margin size is one (1) inch on each side. The margins may be adjusted as needed for resumes that have more information, however, the margins should be kept at least half an inch.
- Fonts – Select a single font that is easy to read such as Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, or Times New Roman. The optimal font size for most text within a resume is 10 to 12 points.
- Section headers – Headers may be one or two points larger than the section text. Section headers may be formatted as bold and/or underlined for further reading ease.
- Punctuation and spelling – Incorrect spelling and grammar are some of the biggest resume mistakes to avoid. Some of the most common resume mistakes by job seekers are incorrect use of periods, hyphens, or semicolons, as well as incorrect capitalization.
- Photo – **Do not** include a photo on the resume. In most industries, it is standard for candidates to exclude their photo from their resume. Knowing when a resume photo is acceptable and reviewing expert tips for including one can help protect yourself from unconscious bias and improve your job prospects.

**See technical standards for Job Interview and Employment Application Process competition resume requirements.*

Use the following headers and content recommendations for the SkillsUSA NLSC Competition Resume, in the order stated below.

Personal & Contact Information

The NLSC competition resume must include the following:

- Name – Include full first and last names. This is used to match your resume with your competitor information, so please include the name used to register for SkillsUSA membership.
 - If you have a preferred name or nickname, you may document it as follows:
 - Elizabeth “Liz” Green
 - William Peter Thomas (Pete)
 - Zhang Qiong (Beth Zhang)
- Mailing Address – It is no longer necessary to include a street or postal mailing address on a resume. If a competitor chooses to do so, they may use their full home or school mailing address, or only the city and state of either location.
- Phone Number – This number should be an active number for the competitor. Competitors should ensure the phone accepts voicemails and the greeting is simple and professional.
- Email Address – Email is one of the primary ways recruiters or hiring managers contact individuals for interview opportunities. It's important to have a professional email address that you check regularly.
 - Professional email addresses are typically the first and last name spelled out, and possibly with initials to denote first or middle name, with a well-known email carrier. For example, lastname.firstname@domain.com.
 - Try different variations of order of first and last names if the first email address choice isn't available.

- Unless necessary, do not use numbers in your email address. If you must use them, do not use more than one or two, and make sure they are appropriate. Never use special characters (#\$~%=) as they can be a big red flag for reliability and credibility. Having only numbers or symbols may trigger a spam alert from the receiver's email provider, meaning the message might not make it to their inbox.
 - Disclaimer: Using a tilde (~) can cause a file to be corrupt and cause a HTTP 404 Not Found client error response status code. This code indicates that the server cannot find the requested resource, meaning that the resume will not be a reliable upload.

Career Objective

The NLSC competition resume must include a career objective that is one to three sentences long – it is a concise statement of the career goal, including a basic understanding of where the competitor is in their career. Instead of highlighting inexperience, frame it as a new arrival to the industry who is ready to learn and grow as a professional.

Education & Training

This section of the NLSC competition resume must include the following:

- Name of educational institution
- City and state
- Dates attended
- Area(s) of study
- Relevant skills and industry certifications

Experience

Not all competitors will have work experience, however, most will have volunteer or other experience (childcare, lawn care, etc.). Middle and high school competitors may also include career-focused experience from camps and specialized events.

- Current experience must be listed first, followed by others in chronological order.
- Name of organization
- City and state
- List of specific responsibilities.
 - This is a great place to include the Essential Elements from the SkillsUSA Framework!
 - Make sure that verb tense is consistent.

Membership and Awards

Be concise! This list should be appropriate and relevant to the position. While many sub-skills can be relevant, you should prioritize the list, so it showcases that you are a qualified candidate. Don't forget to include SkillsUSA accomplishments and Skill Point certificates.

References available upon request.

"References available upon request." should be the only reference statement included on the resume. Do not include the names and contact information for references on the resume.