



## Tips on Preparing a Resume for the Young Distinguished Junior Member Application

A resume is a concise, formatted document used to present your backgrounds and skills; a compilation of your education, work experience and accomplishments. In the Young Distinguished Junior Member application, your resume will give the judges an easy-to-read listing of the various activities you have been involved with through the years. Developing a solid start on your resume for the YDJM application will give you a great starting document for developing a resume that you might need to submit with scholarship applications, or even an internship or job application. Being thorough will pay dividends in the long run, as you will be sure never to forget something you were involved with, even years down the road. You will always be able to reference back to the resume you prepared for this application, and modify it as needed for future purposes. Your resume for the YDJM application should be single-spaced and no more than three pages in length. This is longer than what is typically acceptable for a scholarship or job application, but the goal is to give applicants enough room to be as thorough as possible in listing your activities.

As a young person, you may not feel as if you have enough information to compile a resume if you haven't had any formal work experience. Even if that is the case, you may be surprised how much you actually have to list once you start putting things on paper and thinking creatively.

### Formatting Your Resume

It is important to note that you are not being judged on the formatting of your resume, but rather the content of it. It should be organized in a manner that is clear and easy for judges to read through, typed in an easy-to-read font.

- **TIP:** Remember, YDJM application entry requirements state that you must use a 12-point font, with one-inch margins throughout your application. This requirement DOES apply to your resume, so don't try to use a tiny font or narrow margins to squeeze more onto a page.

The resume for your YDJM application should include a variety of information about your activities, achievements, awards and offices held, with years of involvement listed. It should encompass all types of projects and activities, including Holstein Association, 4-H, FFA, school, church, community, employment and education experience.

- **TIP:** Samples of resumes are widely available online; simply Google "example resume" or "sample resume" if you need ideas on what your resume should look like or different organizational methods.

## Resume Organization Tips

The first step in formulating your resume is to start jotting down some items you want to include, and then consider how you might want to organize your resume so it is easiest to read and understand for the judges. Below are some examples of sections you might want to include, but these are NOT requirements – do some research and consider what categories might best showcase what you want the judges to know about you.

### Contact Information

Having your name and contact information at the top of your resume is a widely-accepted practice. You should include your full name (middle initial/name optional), home address, e-mail and phone number. Be sure that the contact information listed on your resume is current and correct. When listing an email address, think of the impression that it will make on the judges, or a future employer.

- **TIP:** Best practices for choosing an email address include some variation of your name; avoid using an email address that includes nicknames, or misspelled words. Consider the impression of “fred.houghton@gmail.com” as opposed to “cowluvrzzz802@hotmail.com” – which applicant would you take more seriously? It may seem insignificant, but in a competitive world, the little details can make a difference.

### Education

List the schools you have attended, including years attended. If you are in high school or college, you may consider listing your GPA and anticipated graduation date. If you have been accepted to college or have attended other technical school, that may be included in this section as well.

- **TIP:** If you are in high school or college, there is no need to include schools attended earlier than high school. If you are not yet in high school, just list the school you are currently attending.

### Job/Work Experience

Use this section to list any work experience you have. You may not have much at this point in your life; however, this could include anything from working on your home farm, to babysitting, to mowing lawn.

### School Activities

This section could include any school clubs or sports you have participated in.

### Community Activities

This section could include any 4-H, FFA, church or other community activities you have participated in. Be sure to highlight leadership roles you have held in organizations you have been involved with.

- **TIP:** Depending on what and how much information you have to include here, you may want to divide this out into Agricultural Activities and Other Activities.

### Awards & Honors

Use this section to highlight any awards, honor rolls, scholarships, or other recognitions you have received.

### **Other Skills & Proficiencies**

If you have room left available on your resume, you may use this section to highlight any other unique or technical skills that you possess. Have you taken any foreign language or special computer classes in school? This is a good area to list valuable skills you have acquired but might not fit neatly in another section.

Once you have decided on the sections you want your resume to include, then it's time to start really filling in the details. The items listed in each section must also be organized in a logical manner. Common methods of organizing your sections may include chronologically, reverse chronologically, alphabetically, or in order of importance.

- **TIP:** Regardless of the organizational method you choose, be sure to clearly list the years you were involved with each activity.
- **TIP:** Avoid duplicating things unnecessarily. For example, if you have been involved with your 4-H club for 5 years or more, you have likely done a great deal with the club, and maybe even held a few leadership roles. Instead of listing each separately within a long list, consider making a heading for "Busy Beavers 4-H Club", and listing the timeframe you have been a member, and then listing bullet points beneath that heading detailing your involvement and the year (i.e. "Exhibited a Holstein at the county fair"; and "Served as vice president" – would each be their own bullet point under the main heading).
- **TIP:** This should not be an issue, but if you are having trouble fitting all of your activities and accomplishments within the three-page limit, start by culling the activities that you consider least important (those you were involved with for the shortest length of time and least extent).

When you have finished compiling your resume, be sure to have someone proofread it to ensure it does not contain any spelling or grammatical errors.

Now that you have developed a very thorough resume, be sure to keep the document saved on your computer and update it as you participate in more activities. This will give you a great head start for the future when you start applying for scholarships, to colleges, and for internships and jobs!