

Creating a Description for a Project

Careful and deliberate formatting can make your academic and/or personal projects just as valuable on your resume as an internship or a job. Therefore, we recommend formatting your project(s) just as you would format a job or an internship. Be sure to especially include culminating projects such as: senior design projects, thesis projects, or dissertation projects. There is no one-set way to format a project description on a resume, but here are some helpful tips to guide you:

1. Give your project a title. You create project titles on your own, or use ones provided by in-class projects; self-created titles are especially acceptable for independent projects you have done in your spare time.
2. Include the class or the school you completed/or completing the project (if applicable).
3. Include a month and year you worked on the project, or date-to-date (e.g. Fall 2017 or Sept. 2017-Present).
4. Reflect on all of the steps of your project from the idea, to the initial design, to the development/adjustment, to the testing, to the prototype construction, to the presentation of your project (either in-class or in competitions/conferences). Think of the entire “life-cycle” of the project and give each stage in the project development its own bullet point.
5. Remember to begin each bullet point with a strong engineering verb (see our verb list for ideas). Be sure to adjust your verb for present and past tense. E.g. develop (present tense) versus developed (past tense).
6. Include the technical skill(s) utilized in the projects as much as possible (e.g. AutoCAD, SolidWorks, C/C++, Excel, etc.).
7. Quantify what you have accomplished as much as you can (e.g. “decreased carbon emissions by 10%,” “complied cost estimates to ensure product could be mass-produced at under 10 cents per unit”).
8. If possible, indicate next steps of the project, such as pitches to companies, exploration of patent applications, etc.
9. Example:

Solar-Powered Lighted Bike Path

Sept. 2017-Present

Senior Design Project, UIC Civil & Materials Engineering Department

- Collaborated on a four-person team to develop a solar-powered lightening system to illuminate bike/pedestrian paths at night
- Developed integrative solar panels into bike commuter paths by using crystalline silicon encased in safety glass, mounted in concrete
- Created schematics of design using modeling software such as AutoCAD, SAP, and Microstation
- Amended initial design to account for bike skids, to repel dirt, and capability to capture sunlight
- Conducted material and labor cost analysis to determine feasibility of project execution
- Presented model design drafts and cost analysis at the annual UIC Senior Design Expo in May 2018
- Explored possibility of solar-path implementation by consulting the UIC Office of Sustainability