

## Planning Your Next Career Move – Resume Tips for the Statistical Programmer

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### ABSTRACT

The statistical programming market is HOT! No doubt about it, and you want to take the opportunity to build your career and move to the next level. A resume is your first impression when submitting to a company. It is circulated and used by many people in an organization to screen, evaluate and determine whether you fit the job role. As a prospective candidate, you must take time and effort to ensure that your resume is current, streamlined and highlights essential work experience related to the job you are applying for. Interviewers like us review many resumes, and over time we've agreed that there are a couple of quick wins to help the interviewer evaluate your resume and determine if you will fit the job role. This paper provides quick tips to prepare and modernize your resume for high-impact review so that you get that next interview.

### INTRODUCTION

Developing and writing your resume should be done in a thoughtful way. Research indicates that hiring managers tend to spend only 6 seconds per resume! Rest assured, we spend more than 6 seconds on resume reviews but even the most seasoned hiring managers are pressed for time these days so it's critical that your resume can be easily reviewed to reveal if you are a good fit.

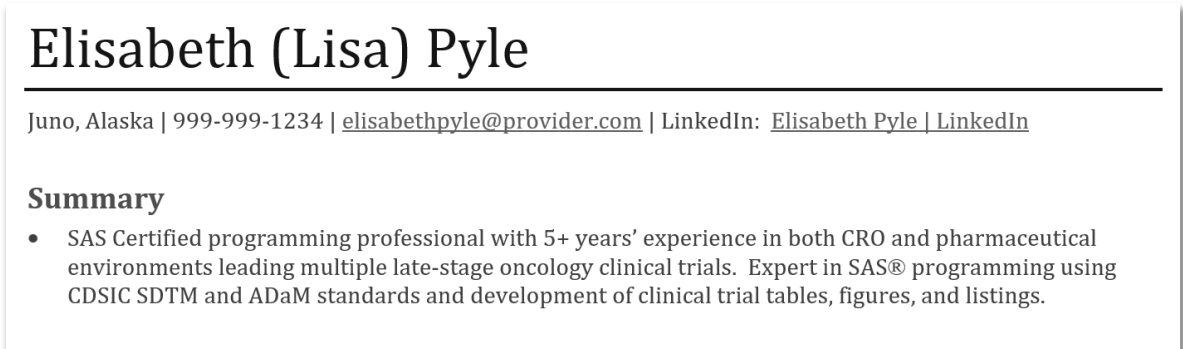
Hiring managers review resumes in detail. They look at the basic information, your experience, skills and even your professional social media footprint to determine your fit to the job.

### 10 TIPS FOR GETTING THAT NEXT POSITION

1. **Use your legal name as it appears on your driver's license and legal documents.** Any other name on your resume, like a nickname or a format not on legal documents, causes confusion for the hiring managers. If you are known by a nickname, put it in parenthesis along with your legal name. Mixing nicknames, reversing the order of your first name and last name, or using shortened versions of your name on your resume can hinder a manager's review of your resume. Your resume name should be consistent with your email address and match any professional reference, publications, or online profiles.
2. **Add a hyperlink to your LinkedIn profile.** As a seasoned programmer, you've likely started building your brand on LinkedIn. Having a LinkedIn account allows you to connect and maintain positive working relationships throughout your career. From a hiring perspective, a social media footprint will validate your resume information and augment your experience and involvement in the industry. It is beneficial to make sure your LinkedIn profile has a recent photo and that your name is consistent with your resume name.
3. **Add your email, mobile or phone number and location.** Include your email and either your mobile or phone number. You do not need to include your full address, but you should include a location. Your location should reflect where you live and should be consistent with your address. Your location is still relevant to have on a resume especially if you plan to apply for a remote role. For the hiring manager, it is important to understand what time zone you are in when you are applying to a remote role. There is no need for street detail, just a city and state are helpful and quick for the hiring manager to note.
4. **Include a well written summary section.** A summary is helpful for the hiring manager to quickly understand if you have the minimum expected work experience for the role you are applying to. Include in your summary the correct total number of years you've been working. Rounding, like "8+ years", is acceptable. A lengthy bulleted list of skills and experience at the beginning of a resume is not usually helpful. Listing skills without a company and projects, or project study

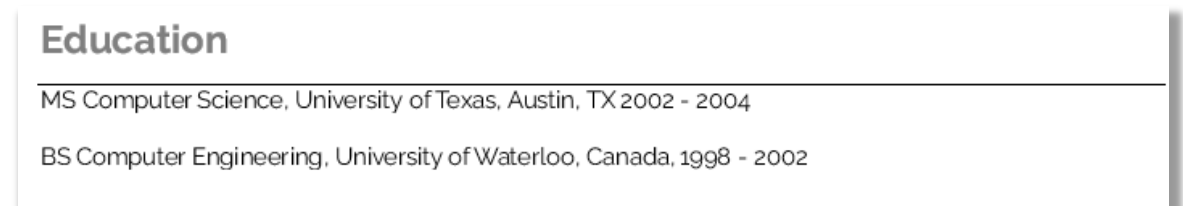
phase and therapeutic area, for which you gained the skill set makes it difficult for the hiring manager to assess the proficiency of the skill you possess and in what framework you developed the skill. Instead, including a few sentences summarizing your work experience at the top of your resume will provide the hiring manager with a quick insight into your work experience.

Figure 1 Modernize your resume, include your LinkedIn profile. Resume name matches LinkedIn profile name.



5. **All education degrees should be clearly noted along with institutions.** Clearly specify the degree and discipline as it was issued by the institution. Rewriting the degree information in a different way will cause confusion for the hiring manager and question the validity of the content of your resume. If the institution is ex-US, add the country of the location of the institution. Also, if your institution is ex-US and is commonly known by an abbreviation, we suggest writing out the school's name, do not use abbreviations only as the school may not be as known or familiar by just the acronym to the hiring manager.

Figure 2 Universities and educational institutions should include exact resume and location. Academic institution names should be completely written out for easier review. Do not just use the acronym name.



6. **Include employers and employment experience.** For full-time on-site positions that you've held, include employer and title completely along with the duration of employment. If you've been promoted include all titles under the employer to indicate increasing levels of responsibility. Include the skills you utilized and developed while at the employer and a high-level description of the projects you supported and don't forget to highlight any major programming contributions you made.

Be specific in the experience content and use metrics when you can. For example, if you coached junior staff, indicate how many staff you coached... 1, 2, 5, etc. If you worked in multiple therapeutic areas, indicate which ones but only add indications for which you have sufficient experience and you can speak clearly about in an interview. If you've worked on an Integrated Summary of Safety (ISS), write how many protocols were included and summarized.

Figure 3 Employer, duration of employment and title of the role.

Professional Experience	
<b>Merck</b> Director, BARDS Statistical Programming Associate Director, BARDS Statistical Programming	North Wales, PA Sep 2021 – Present Apr 2017 – Aug 2021

If you have worked as a contractor designate it on your resume in parentheses. If you are employed for a functional service provider (FSP), designate it clearly on your resume and indicate the client, as appropriate, and if you worked on-site, remotely or were hybrid.

Figure 4 FSP or contractor employment

Professional Experience	
<b>Accenture</b> Client: Merck & Co., Inc. Senior Programmer (remote) Oncology Therapeutic Area	Jun 2020 – Jul 2022

Competition for remote jobs is high so highlighting superior and demonstrated skills in communication, collaboration software, and time and project management can help you stand out. If you've had significant experience working remotely, you may even want to consider adding a "Remote Skills" section to your resume.

- 7. Include relevant recent employment information.** Old experience information on a resume can be distracting. Most hiring managers don't focus on employment experience listed on a resume beyond 10 years mostly because candidates forget the details of their work and aren't able to speak in detail about the experience. Experience over 10 years can be included but should be streamlined to skills that are closely relevant to the job you are applying for today or highlight significant achievement or impact. Consider streamlining employment information older than 10 years and focus on high-quality, relevant experience. When summarizing recent experience, include or highlight specific examples of the impact of your work in the organization. Use keywords relevant to SAS® programming sensibly thru your resume, as this will help your resume get noticed by hiring managers.
- 8. Include publications, presentations and/or conference involvement, and notable training.** Highlight papers you've authored or presented at technical conferences or in journals. List recent notable training to share how you are keeping your programming skills current.
- 9. List all your programming languages in one section of your resume.** Itemizing all SAS products within the body of your resume can be distracting. If you list multiple coding languages, describe your proficiency level for them.
- 10. Keep your resume short and succinct and use a pleasing format.** Submitting a resume for a programming position over two pages usually contains redundant information. We have gotten resumes that are multiple pages, even longer than 4 pages at times! A poorly written resume is like a badly written email. You waste people's time and energy, and it may just be skipped. You must dedicate time to streamlining your experience on a resume. The format should be easy to read, both online and in printed format.

- a. Is it easy to read in a well formatted style? Sometime resumes include bolded words intermittently throughout the resume. We see this a lot when resumes are lengthy and there is an attempt to focus the reader on key points. Instead, it would be easier if the resume was streamlined for content and the font and style are consistent throughout the resume.
- b. Make sure to print your resume. Can you adequately see all the information in a printed version? Keep in mind that more people are working remotely, and they may be using personal printers rather than high-quality corporate printers to print and view documents. Occasionally, prospective candidates put information in the Word document header, like the SAS Certification logos. These logos can get cut off when printed on personal printers or worse yet, the images cover other relevant information.

Before finalizing, proofread your resume for spelling and grammar errors, and have someone else review it for feedback.

Figure 5 Consolidate technical skills into one section.

<b>Skills</b>	
Languages:	SAS, R, SQL, Python, JavaScript, VBA, XML
SAS Tools	SAS/Base, SAS/Stat, SAS/Macros, SAS/Graph, SAS/ODS, SAS/SQL
Software	Pinnacle 21, UltraEdit, UltraCompare, Adobe Acrobat
Databases	Oracle Clinical, MS SQL Server, MS Access, PL/SQL
Office Tools:	MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint, MS Project
Operating Systems:	UNIX, WINDOWS
Certifications: SAS® Certified Base Programmer for SAS 9 2012 SAS® Certified Advanced Programmer for SAS 9 2013 SAS® Certified Clinical Trials Programmer Using SAS 9 2014	

## A FEW ADDITIONAL NOTES

If you are applying for a programming position, a cover letter is not value added. Instead, plan to have well documented sample code ready that is authored by you and reflective of your programming skill. The code should not be proprietary to your company, but instead it should be code that you can share at an interview and include with your resume submission. Make sure the code excludes any confidential information.

## CONCLUSION

Your resume should accurately reflect your domain expertise, skills, and experience. Hiring is a key process within the Statistical Programming Department and managers review many candidates resume in detail to ensure that you are a good fit and can do the work that you will be hired to perform. You should be able to speak confidently about and elaborate on any information listed on your resume in a screening or interview process.

Finally, make sure that you continually update your resume by adding new skills, roles, responsibilities, and courses taken and even consider having versions specific to the job you desire. Doing an annual review will help you to edit and summarize older information and allow you to add and highlight more recent accomplishments. In this way, when that ideal job posting is out there, you can quickly submit a solid resume that will help you to stand out in the crowd and hopefully land you that next job.

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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