

Your Resume: Language Proficiency

How do I talk about my language proficiency on my resume?

01

Break it down.

Consider these three types of communication:

- Interpretive: how you understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed
- Interpersonal: how you interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, sign, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings and opinions
- Presentational: how you present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, persuade, and narrate while adapting to diverse audiences

02

What can I do with my language skills?

Check the description that best fits your skill set for each type of communication. If you fit into more than one description, underline the words and phrases that describe your ability in the target language.

Interpretive

Can I...?

- ...identify the general topic and some basic information in familiar contexts
- ...understand the main idea and some pieces of information on familiar topics
- ...understand the main message and supporting details on a variety of familiar and general interest topics across various timeframes
- ...interpret and infer meaning from complex, academic and professional texts on a range of unfamiliar, abstract, and specialized issues
- ...interpret and infer meaning from dense, structurally sophisticated texts on a wide range of global issues and abstract concepts, with cultural references, colloquialisms, and dialects

Interpersonal

Can I...?

- ...communicate in spontaneous conversations on familiar and everyday topics, using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, simple sentences, and questions
-participate in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations on familiar topics, create sentences and series of sentences to ask and answer a variety of questions
-maintain spontaneous spoken, written, or signed conversations and discussions across various time frames on familiar, as well as unfamiliar, concrete topics, using a series of connected sentences and probing questions
-participate fully and effectively in spontaneous spoken, written, or signed discussions and debates on issues and ideas ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, including supporting arguments and exploring hypotheses
-interact, negotiate, and debate on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, fully adapting to the cultural context of the conversation, using spoken, written, or signed language.

Persentational

Can I...?

- ...present information on familiar and everyday topics using a variety of practiced or memorized words, phrases, and simple sentences through spoken, written, or signed language
-communicate information, make presentations, and express my thoughts about familiar topics, using sentences and series of connected sentences through spoken, written, or signed language
-deliver detailed and organized presentations on familiar, as well as unfamiliar concrete topics, in paragraphs and using various time frames through spoken, written, or signed language
-deliver extended presentations on abstract or hypothetical issues and ideas, ranging from broad general interests to my areas of specialized expertise, with precision of expression and to a wide variety of audiences, using spoken, written, or signed language

-deliver sophisticated and articulate presentations on a wide range of global issues and highly abstract concepts, fully adapting to the cultural context of the audience, using spoken, written, or signed language.

03

Describe your skills.

- Based on the skills you checked/highlighted, write 2-3 concise bullet points (in your own words) that communicate these skills to a prospective employer.
 - Ex: Exchange information and ideas through interpersonal discussion on a variety of academic and social topics

04

Incorporate.

- Your bullet points can go under a "Language Skills" section of your resume.
- As you develop your language skills, revisit and revise these descriptions.

For additional assistance, review [proficiency levels](#) (Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, Superior, Distinguished. Based on the descriptions provided, determine which level best matches your current, language skill level.

*The language in this guide is adapted from the [NCSSFL-ACTFL CAN-DO STATEMENTS](#) (2017).