



Memorandum



To: Dr. Karen Kuralt
From: Rhonda L. Thomas
Date: July 2, 2018
Subject: **Portfolio -> Design Project 3 -> Jason D Newport Resume Redesign**

Dr. Kuralt,

You asked that I submit a design portfolio consisting of four design projects. As requested, I submit to you my final design for project 3 of 4 - Jason D Newport Resume Redesign. This memorandum explains my design process. I have included two alternative drafts for your consideration.

I would appreciate any feedback you can offer. Please contact me if you have any questions. You can reach me by email at rlthomas@ualr.edu.

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Introduction and purpose [\[↑\]](#)

This document was a resume redesign project, assigned to me in Document Design (RHET 4305) at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. It is the fictitious resume of Jason D Newport.

The primary purpose of this document is to facilitate Jason D Newport's securement of employment. The document aims to achieve this by presenting and explaining Newport's employment and education background, as well as other relevant skills, to potential employers.

Description of the users/readers [\[↑\]](#)

According to the Engineering Management Institute, some of the top mechanical engineering hiring companies include NASA, Google, Boeing, Apple, and Lockheed Martin.¹ The primary audience for this resume come from this category of potential employers; in particular, human resource personnel within these companies. Demographically, this group are career professionals and many will have extensive academic backgrounds. Secondary audiences might include members of the academic community.

Description of the employer/client [\[↑\]](#)

The fictitious client for this project is Jason D. Newport, a mechanical engineer. For the purposes of this project, as the designer I chose to apply the ethos of Newport's profession to Newport's personality. In addition to his Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering degree, Newport minored in Technical Writing, Mathematics, and Business and Management. This information suggest to me that Newport has a highly organized mentality. He is methodical in his work and completes tasks and projects with precision.²

Context and design constraints [\[↑\]](#)

Readers of this document will likely be accessing it online via an online portfolio or as an attachment in an email. This context allowed me to be a bit more frivolous with color, because I didn't need to factor in degradation to document quality that can sometimes happen when documents are printed; nor did I have to overly consider the cost of printing.

One of the constraints for this document is that both the client and the users/readers are from a highly professional background and, therefore, expect a degree of constraint in the look of this document. However, in expecting a resume to have a particular look, there is always the risk of creating a document that is boring and uninteresting simply because its look has been overused.

Another constraint in designing the initial version of this document was the time limitation of one week. I struggled with controlling the layout and ran out of time, so was not able to resolve some of the design issues.

Design rationale [\[↑\]](#)

In its original form, Newport's resume lacked visual appeal and was uninspiring. I needed a way to maximize its visual appeal so that it would stand apart from other resumes. I wanted Newport's personality to come across on the page. Newport is a mechanical engineer, which is a highly technical and precise field; so I aimed to design a resume with clean, precise lines and sharp edges. I chose different hues of gray to add contrast.

What I needed to do was break the formatting mold, without breaking the rules. I did this with, what I refer to as, the *additional info bar* – a 2" wide by 11" inch high vertical bar located on the left-hand side of the page.

I incorporated subtle color to add contrast; the additional info bar, for example, is RGB 64 64 64 – a soft, grayish-black color. The font color on the info bar is RGB 217 217 217 – a silvery color. The headings on the bar are black, another subtle contrast. Overall the additional info bar sits in sharp contrast to a crisp, white page with a black typeface. I felt these design elements fit with the personality of the resume, which reflects the personality of Jason D Newport.

While print resumes are more readable with the major copy in a serif font (e.g., Garamond, Georgia) and headings in sans serif fonts (e.g., Lucida Sans, Tahoma, Verdana), Newport's resume will be read primarily online and as an attachment to an email. Based on the context in which this document will be read, I chose Calibri, a sans serif typeface, for the main body copy, set to 12-point. I felt this would ensure the resume was both legible and readable when accessed online or via an email attachment. I also used Calibri at 14-point for the main headings. I reduced the Calibri typeface to 10-point for the additional info bar.

Readers can see that 'Education' and 'Experience' are visually separate groups by way of ample white space between them. The white space also makes the groups of information more legible and readable. Adhering to the rules of proximity discussed by author Robin Williams, readers have a visual cue that 'Education' and 'Experience' are logically connected, as they share the same typeface and weight for their titles.³

I chose to place Education before Experience, as Newport's experience in the field of mechanical engineering is brief. Within the Education group, I drew attention to Newport's minor studies – 'Technical Writing', 'Mathematics', and 'Business and Management' by emphasizing the word, 'Minors' within the group. Likewise, I emphasized Newport's 'Advanced Engineering Courses' heading to highlight the courses he completed in this area.

Note: I assumed most of the companies viewing or receiving this resume would be American companies, so I chose a paper size of 8.5" x 11", set to portrait orientation.

Design evolution [\[↑\]](#)

Version 1 [\[↑\]](#)

My initial version of this document was designed in Microsoft Word. Since the context for this document suggests it will likely be viewed online via an electronic portfolio or as an attachment in an email, I designed it to be converted to a PDF. Converting it to a PDF would ensure its portability and protect its underlying structure – and, therefore, ensure it maintained readability.

In this version, I utilized a table to aid me in controlling layout and the placement of elements on the page. As mentioned above, it was a design goal to have an additional info bar on the left-hand side of the page. In this version, the bar is a 1.5" wide by 11" high *table column*. The additional info bar should have aligned with the left and top edges of the page; I was unsuccessful, however, in achieving this design goal in the time available. [Note: I should have known from website design that, when using a table to control the layout of a page, many elements are unexpectedly impacted by changes made to the table.]

Version 2 (final draft) [\[↑\]](#)

In this document's second version, I again used Microsoft Word. In this version, however, I deleted the table and utilized shapes and textboxes for control over placement of design elements. This decision was a success as I had greater control with placement and alignment than that offered by a table. While the overall look of the second version hasn't changed dramatically, its underlying structure has completely changed. Every element is either a shape or a text box, which gave me greater flexibility in laying out the document. You will notice, for example, that I was able to successfully align the additional info bar with the left and top edges of the page. Also, using shapes to control layout and get the vertical bar left-aligned allowed me to widen the bar to two inches, which, I believe, creates a better balance.

Also, in this version, I took the advice of some of my classmates and enlarged Newport's name.

Version 3 [\[↑\]](#)

I was in love with the slate-grey color of the vertical additional info bar on the left-hand side of the page; I decided, however, to be brave – for the sake of the client – and try a bolder color. According to Visual.ly, the color red conveys the emotional message of strength, passion, and excitement. In marketing, it conveys "strong energy and high confidence."⁴ I changed the color of the left, vertical info bar to RGB 76 0 0, a burgundy color, and the typeface color to a silvery RGB 199 199 199.

As with Version 1, I took the advice of some of my classmates and enlarged Newport's name.

Design assessment [\[↑\]](#)

Version 2 became my final version. Even though I found the burgundy additional info bar appealing, I felt it was less suitable to both the client's personality and his profession. With the document's purpose, client, audience, and context in mind, I believe I designed a final version of this resume with a visual rhetoric that suitably represents the client.

From my initial design through to my final version, my skill at using Microsoft Word as a design tool has improved immensely. I started out in a trial-and-error fashion. By the end of this project, however, I discovered I was deliberately selecting Word's tools and features more deliberately to achieve my design goals.

Notes [\[↑\]](#)

1. Anthony Fasano, "Top Mechanical Engineering Companies To Work For," *Engineering Management Institute*, <https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/top-mechanical-engineering-companies-work/>
2. INTJ Personality ("The Architect"), *16Personalities: Personality Types*. <https://www.16personalities.com/intj-personality>. I assigned Newport the "INTJ Personality ('The Architect')" personality, an "imaginative yet decisive" type of individual. He employs "a sense of perfectionism and even morality to this work" and has a "strict code of conduct" when it comes to his work.
3. Robin Williams, *The Non-Designer's Design Book* (Berkeley: Peachpit Press, 2008), 19.
4. Tarresa Muffet, "Psychology of Colors in Brands," *Visual.ly* (blog), <https://visual.ly/community/infographic/business/color-psychology-brands>

Bibliography [\[↑\]](#)

EMI (Engineering Management Institute). Retrieved 17 Jun 2018.

<https://engineeringmanagementinstitute.org/top-mechanical-engineering-companies-work/>

Visual.ly. Psychology of Colors in Brands. Retrieved 17 Jun 2018.

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