RESUME WRITING GUIDE: BUSINESS SECTORS

What is the Purpose of a Resume?

A resume is a marketing tool and is one of the ways to tell your story by presenting your skills, knowledge, and experience to a potential employer in order to demonstrate your fit for a specific position. *The average employer spends only 15-20 seconds reviewing a resume. Ensure that yours is targeted, error-free, and easy to skim!*

Remember: *your resume does not get you the job – its purpose is to get you an interview!*

How to write an outstanding resume:

- **One page in length:** Employers prefer a ONE page resume for applicants with less than 8 years of experience.
- **Margins and Font:** We recommend 0.5 inch margins or greater and 11 point Times New Roman font.
- **Format:** Use the Resume Template for Business Sectors (download here from GWork) to ensure consistent indentation, capitalization, punctuation, font style, font size, spacing, and other formatting parameters. See a sample of the template on page 6 & a resume example on page 7.
- **Avoid Clutter:** Too much text and not enough white space may discourage someone from reading your resume.
- **Target Your Content:** Highlight experiences & transferable skills most relevant to the industry and the position.
- **Incorporate Keywords from the Job Posting:** Keep in mind that computer filters are often used to search for keywords within resumes. Use language and keywords specific to the industry, job function and job posting. You can also refer to the industry-specific keyword document found in GWork.
- **Avoid Pronouns**: Personal or possessive pronouns (I, my, me, we, our) are not appropriate in a resume.
- **Be Clear:** Show clear career and/or skill set progression.
- **Honesty is the Best Policy:** Don't exaggerate or embellish your experience or include false information.
- **Proofread:** Spellcheck does not always catch typos. Have at least 2 other people proofread your resume**.** *Some employers will not consider a job candidate if they see even one typo on the resume.*

Resume Sections:

HEADING
- Include name, mailing address, telephone number (home and/or mobile) and email address (in that order).
- If you have a *complete and updated* LinkedIn profile, include the URL after your email address. Be sure to create a customized URL under "Edit Profile."

EDUCATION
- **List all institutions and degrees:** Include dates of completion in reverse chronological order. In general, high school information should be removed during sophomore year. However, if there is something distinctive/unique about your high school experience, consider including it.
- **GPA:** Including this is optional, unless the employer requires you to do so. We recommend doing so if 3.0+.
- **International Schools:** You may provide a frame of reference. Example: "*One of the top 5 universities in China*" or "*Ranked as the top engineering university in India*."
- **Include academic accomplishments:** Scholarships, case competitions, special projects, and relevant coursework can be included to showcase your academic skills and experience.

Resume Sections, continued:

WORK EXPERIENCE
- **Reverse Chronological Order:** All work experiences should be listed in reverse chronological order (the most recent position first). Include the employer name, city and state, job title, and dates of employment.
- **Bullet points = accomplishments:** Don't just list job *responsibilities* in your bullet points. Show the *results* of your work and how it helped the organization. Refer to pages 3-4 for help writing Accomplishment Statements.
- **Use Action Verbs:** Begin each bullet point with a strong action verb. Employers often scan the first few words of each bullet, so catch their attention with strong action verbs that reflect your relevant skills.
  - o   Do not use any action verb more than once under the same job.
  - o   Avoid phrases like "Responsible for" and "Selected to," which are more passive.
  - o   See Action Verbs list on page 5 of this guide for ideas.
- **Quantify and Qualify Results**: Include specifics through numbers and verbal descriptors. Refer to pages 3-4 for help writing Accomplishment Statements.
- **Highlight Transferable Skills:** These are skills that can be utilized in a wide variety of positions and industries. Examples: project management, research, teamwork, relationship-building, communication and leadership.
- **Be Creative:** Experience doesn't only include paid/professional work. You may also include leadership positions, volunteer work, course projects, independent endeavors, etc. in which you had significant responsibility.
- **"Skills Gained:"** for Juniors and Seniors wishing to include a "Skills Gained" line, include this immediately under the job title. For example, "*Skills Gained: leadership, teamwork, forecasting, presentation, relationship building, Advanced Excel.*" Or you can highlight the main skill gained at the beginning of each bullet point:
  - o   *Leadership: managed a team of 7 women and hosted weekly meetings on campus with reps to provide weekly agenda and task lists; sent meeting recap emails to remind reps of tasks that need to be accomplished.*
  - o   *Teamwork: oversaw 20-person team responsible for designing, building, and racing a remote control car against 10 competing extern teams. Managed 3 sub-groups by budgeting time for group tasks and reporting team status updates to group leaders.*

SKILLS/ACTIVITIES
- **Technical Skills:** list relevant computer applications, languages, and technical hardware/network skills from most unique to least unique. Microsoft Office Suite is almost an implied skill, so it may not be necessary to list. However, if a job calls for "Advanced Excel skills" and you have that, include it on your resume.
- **Languages:** acceptable proficiency terms: native/bilingual; full professional proficiency/fluent; minimum professional proficiency/conversational, limited working proficiency, elementary/basic. Refer to the US State Department website for definitions.
- **Leadership / Affiliations / Volunteer / Interests**
  - o **Leadership:**
    - Include your most recent leadership roles; avoid using outdated experiences
    - If you have extensive leadership experience, you could create a separate "Leadership Experience" section or you can include leadership positions under the "Work Experience" section.
  - o **Affiliations:** List professional organizations and other community affiliations that support your career goals, including student organizations.
  - o **Volunteer:** List most recent and/or relevant activities first. In general, employers like to see some type of volunteer activity on the resume even if it's not directly related to the job you're applying for.
  - o **Interests:** List interests that are specific, unique, & that show sustained interest and activity; avoid potentially controversial topics. Examples: *scuba diving; travel in Latin America; historical biographies.*

Writing Bullet Points as Accomplishment Statements:
Situation - Action - Result (SAR)

SITUATION - ACTION - RESULT

Bullet points under each position should tell a mini-story and are more effective when written as Accomplishment Statements in the Situation-Action-Result (SAR) format. By using the SAR model, you will ensure that a reader understands *in detail* **what you did, why you did it, and what happened as a result of your actions**. Providing specific quantifiers and qualifiers will make your work and its results even more clear.

- *Bullet point without SAR: Worked with business owners to increase sales among university students.*
  This describes your job responsibilities only. It doesn't show *exactly* what it means to "work" with business owners, what skills you developed, and the results of your work.
- *Bullet point with SAR: Developed and implemented an in-person marketing strategy with business owners around target universities that resulted in achieving the highest sales record in the last 38 years of $119,385.*

QUANTIFY RESULTS

As often as possible, use statistics, percentages, or numbers in your bullet points to demonstrate the scope of your accomplishments. This is especially important for students pursuing careers in quantitative-based fields such as finance, economics, and data analysis. Examples:
- *Completed competitive and strategic due diligence for a venture capital firm that led to acquiring $25,000 in initial funding.*
- *Strategized an effective marketing plan to promote Rent The Runway on campus, resulting in a 100% increase in sales for the Inaugural Ball with over 60 dress rentals in January 2013.*

QUALIFY RESULTS

Sometimes results aren't quantifiable, but can be illustrated with a qualitative outcome. Examples:
- *Created a training curriculum and led 20 workshops to teach chapter members how to properly recruit women for the chapter, enabling the chapter to collectively reach annual recruitment goals for the third straight year.*
- *Developed a pitch using advisory and assurance fact sheets to convince a hypothetical client that PwC offers the most effective services for the client's needs. Received positive feedback from PwC partners on presentation skills and pitch methodologies.*

Questions to ask yourself when creating S-A-R Accomplishment Statements:

Use the following questions to reflect on your past positions & what you achieved in each one.

- Did the work you performed positively impact the organization as a whole? If so, how?
- Who, or how many people, will ultimately benefit from your work?
- Did you identify any problems or challenges?
- Did you resolve or minimize any problems?
- Did you discover and take advantage of any opportunities?
- Did you target a need for a product, service, plan, program, system, method, procedure, technique?
- Did you reduce costs, waste, time, or effort?
- Did you produce reports whose recommendations were well received by senior management, and whose suggestions were incorporated into their strategic planning?
- Did you uncover accounting errors and correct them, saving the organization money?
- Did you reduce the liability for the company by suggesting safety improvement, improved security?
- Did you create any original works: reports, brochures, newsletters, guides, manuals, proposals, contracts?
- Did you develop or design a new program, plan, service, product, process, project, system method, strategy?
- Did you improve (*redesign, streamline or reorganize*), administer, or implement any projects, plans, programs, processes, services, products?
- Did you develop new markets, territories, clients, accounts?
- Did you increase or participate in increasing sales, profits, market share, volume, distribution, production, revenues, cash flow?
- Did you formulate or participate in formulating any management decisions, policies, goals, organizational changes, acquisitions, recruitment?
- Did you make any recommendations that saved money, made money, increased efficiency or productivity?
- Did you improve employee morale?
- Did you open or establish a new office, department, branch, facility?
- Did you improve quality or standards for hiring, products, services?
- Did you make a technical contribution?
- Did you facilitate or improve communication among employees, with clients, or with the community?
- Did you improve customer satisfaction or service?
- Did you train, coach, or mentor team members or clients?
- Did you complete deadlines ahead of time?
- Did you increase social media engagement? By what percentage or number of followers/likes/clicks?

ACTION VERBS by category (in CAPS)

ANALYZED	Consulted	Experimented	Promoted	Shared	Motivated	Cared	Exercised
Abstracted	Cooperated	Facilitated	Provided	Spoke	Negotiated	Catered	Expedited
Anticipated	Enlisted	Fashioned	Reduced	Stimulated	Persuaded	Delivered	Explained
Assessed	Ensured	Financed	Restored	Strengthened	Promoted	Dispensed	Facilitated
Ascertained	Facilitated	Fixed	Saved	Substituted	Reconciled	Entertained	Fostered
Audited	Fostered	Formulated	Stimulated	Supported	Resolved	Facilitated	Governed
Briefed	Handled	Founded	Strengthened	Sustained	Solved	Furnished	Guided
Calculated	Helped	Generated	Upgraded	Taught	*ORGANIZED*	Helped	Handled
Clarified	Located	Improved	*COUNSELED/*	Trained	Accumulated	Led	Headed
Compared	Participated	Increased	*INSTRUCTED/*	Tutored	Arranged	Listened	Hired
Computed	Preserved	Influenced	*LEARNED*	Validated	Assembled	Maintained	Implemented
Concluded	Protected	Initiated	Adapted	*OPERATED/*	Balanced	Motivated	Instructed
Conceptualized	Referred	Innovated	Advised	*MAINTAINED*	Budgeted	Performed	Maintained
Correlated	Represented	Instituted	Advocated	Activated	Built	Prepared	Met
Critiqued	Served	Integrated	Aided	Adjusted	Catalogued	Procured	Mentored
Debated	Strengthened	Introduced	Applied	Adapted	Clarified	Provided	Monitored
Defined	Summarized	Invented	Assessed	Changed	Classified	Raised	Motivated
Detected	Supported	Launched	Briefed	Clarified	Collated	Recommended	Navigated
Determined	Sustained	Marketed	Cared	Corrected	Collected	Represented	Ordered
Diagnosed	*COMMUNICATED*	Modeled	Clarified	Continued	Completed	Responded	Organized
Discriminated	Addressed	Modified	Coached	Edited	Compiled	Satisfied	Oversaw
Dissected	Advertised	Navigated	Comforted	Eliminated	Composed	Served	Planned
Estimated	Answered	Originated	Communicated	Executed	Coordinated	Stimulated	Prepared
Evaluated	Briefed	Perceived	Conducted	Expedited	Copied	Supplied	Presided
Examined	Corresponded	Performed	Consulted	Facilitated	Correlated	Supervised	Prioritized
Figured	Debated	Pioneered	Coordinated	Fixed	Detailed	*SOLD*	Promoted
Graded	Explained	Planned	Demonstrated	Implemented	Developed	Advertised	Regulated
Identified	Expressed	Prioritized	Educated	Installed	Displayed	Auctioned	Reinforced
Indexed	Facilitated	Produced	Emphasized	Modified	Edited	Bartered	Resolved
Inspected	Interpreted	Promoted	Enabled	Navigated	Facilitated	Enlisted	Retained
Integrated	Interviewed	Proposed	Encouraged	Ordered	Filed	Facilitated	Reviewed
Interpreted	Lectured	Recommended	Enlightened	Oversaw	Gathered	Generated	Scheduled
Interviewed	Listened	Restored	Established	Performed	Graphed	Improved	Selected
Inventoried	Marketed	Refined	Exercised	Prepared	Identified	Led	Set
Investigated	Prepared	Revamped	Explained	Piloted	Indexed	Maintained	Solved
Judged	Presented	Set	Facilitated	Preserved	Inspected	Marketed	Strengthened
Maintained	Printed	Shaped	Familiarized	Prioritized	Inventoried	Motivated	Supervised
Mapped	Programmed	Simplified	Fostered	Produced	Kept	Negotiated	Taught
Monitored	Publicized	Solved	Guided	Programmed	Located	Persuaded	Trained
Observed	Quoted	Styled	Helped	Promoted	Maintained	Promoted	Updated
Perceived	Recorded	Streamlined	Implemented	Protected	Mapped	Raised	*COLLABORATED*
Predicted	Reported	Substituted	Improved	Ran	Met	Recommended	Coproduced
Projected	Responded	Visualized	Influenced	Reduced	Obtained	Recruited	Cooperated
Qualified	Rewrote	*IMPROVED/*	Informed	Regulated	Organized	Stimulated	Engaged
Ranked	Spoke	*INCREASED*	Inspired	Replaced	Planned	*LED/MANAGED*	Organized
Read	Taught	Achieved	Interpreted	Saved	Prepared	Allocated	Partnered
Reasoned	Wrote	Accomplished	Investigated	Screened	Prioritized	Approved	Met
Related	*CREATED/*	Acquired	Lectured	Serviced	Processed	Arranged	Participated
Researched	*DEVELOPED*	Advanced	Led	Set	Programmed	Assigned	Shared
Reviewed	Acted	Assured	Listened	Sustained	Ranked	Authorized	Strategized
Screened	Activated	Attained	Maintained	Transported	Recorded	Chaired	Synchronized
Scanned	Adapted	Completed	Manipulated	Upheld	Reorganized	Clarified	Worked
Solved	Assembled	Conserved	Mastered	Utilized	Reproduced	Coached	
Studied	Authored	Continued	Monitored	*NEGOTIATED*	Retrieved	Conducted	
Summarized	Built	Eliminated	Modified	Advised	Revamped	Consulted	
Surveyed	Clarified	Encouraged	Motivated	Advocated	Reviewed	Contracted	
Symbolized	Composed	Enlarged	Observed	Arbitrated	Revised	Controlled	
Synthesized	Conceived	Expanded	Perceived	Bargained	Scheduled	Coordinated	
Tabulated	Constructed	Facilitated	Persuaded	Closed	Set	Decided	
Verified	Corrected	Fostered	Prescribed	Concluded	Simplified	Delegated	
Visualized	Designed	Guaranteed	Programmed	Consolidated	Solved	Directed	
ASSISTED	Devised	Inspired	Promoted	Dealt	Streamlined	Dispatched	
Advised	Discovered	Maximized	Read	Expedited	Structured	Distributed	
Brought	Drafted	Minimized	Reduced	Facilitated	Synthesized	Educated	
Chartered	Eliminated	Motivated	Reflected	Handled	Systemized	Encouraged	
Collaborated	Established	Obtained	Reinforced	Lobbied	Tabulated	Enforced	
Contributed	Expanded	Overcame	Related	Mediated	*SERVED/ AIDED*	Evaluated	
Consolidated	Expedited	Perfected	Restored	Merged	Attended	Executed	

Street, Apt. • City, ST Zip • telephone • email • LinkedIn address

EDUCATION

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY Washington, DC
Bachelor of Arts in Economics Graduation Month Year
GPA: (over) 3.0; list of honors and awards
Relevant Coursework includes: (max. 2 lines)

NAME of other UNIVERSITY OR HIGH SCHOOL City, Country OR City, ST
Study Abroad OR Diploma Month Year – Month Year

WORK EXPERIENCE

NAME OF EMPLOYER (Most Recent) City, ST
Job Title Month Year – Month Year
• Accomplishment #1 (situation, action, result) – no more than three lines per accomplishment.
• Accomplishment #2 (situation, action, result).
• Accomplishment #3 (situation, action, result).

NAME OF EMPLOYER (Next Most Recent) City, ST
Job Title Month Year – Month Year
• Accomplishment #1 (situation, action, result) – no more than three lines per accomplishment.
• Accomplishment #2 (situation, action, result).
• Accomplishment #3 (situation, action, result).
• Accomplishment #4 (situation, action, result).

NAME OF EMPLOYER (Next Recent) City, ST
Job Title Month Year – Month Year
• Accomplishment #1 (situation, action, result) – no more than three lines per accomplishment.
• Accomplishment #2 (situation, action, result).

SKILLS/ACTIVITIES

Technical: list in order of most unique/specialized to most common
Languages: list according to knowledge level (native/bilingual; full professional proficiency/fluent; minimum
professional proficiency/conversational, limited working proficiency, elementary/basic)
Interests: (max. = 3)

(List your leadership functions or membership activities; max. = 6; reverse chronological order)
Title, Organization, Location, Years (most recent)
Title, Organization, Location, Years
Title, Organization, Location, Years
Title, Organization, Location, Years
Title, Organization, Location, Years

Please note: you can download
a template of this resume in Word
format here on GWork:
Resources > Virtual Library >
Resume Template: Business Sectors

IMA STUDENT

123 K Street, Apt. 45 • Washington, DC 20052 • (202)123-4567 • imastudent@gwu.edu
https://www.linkedin.com/in/imastudent

EDUCATION

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY Washington, DC
Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Minor in Business Administration May 2017
GPA: 3.1; Presidential Scholarship recipient; Dean's List
Relevant Coursework includes: Intermediate Microeconomics & Macroeconomics, Econometrics, Calculus I and II,
Financial Management and Markets

CITY UNIVERSITY OF MADRID Madrid, Spain
Study Abroad Program January - May 2016

EXPERIENCE

ERNST & YOUNG, LLP New York, NY
Business Advisory Intern June - August 2016
- Researched the impact of Dodd-Frank legislation on OTC derivatives trading and developed client deliverables in support of Managers and Senior Consultants advising Bank of New York Mellon.
- Prepared detailed analysis of the trade flow and clearing process of derivatives trades within a bank; used Microsoft PowerPoint and Visio to present analysis to Managers.
- Conducted trend analysis on the financial sector's asset allocation over an 8-year period that was used to develop marketing material and forecast client needs.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY Washington, DC
Operations Intern August – December 2015
- Advised on solutions to increase efficiency and clarity of inter-department workflow processes for business partners working on the Office of Financial Research stand-up effort; recommendations were accepted and implemented by senior management.
- Developed a series of Visual Basic macros to help automate and reduce errors in processing over 400 documents, resulting in an annualized cost reduction of 180 labor hours.
- Participated on a task force in an agency-wide effort to analyze current public relations practices as well as generate enhancement strategies.

KOHL'S DEPARTMENT STORE Springfield, MA
Sales Associate July 2014 – August 2015
- Provided quality service and support to an average of 35 customers daily, resulting in increased customer service scores for the store.
- Maintained multiple displays and restocked merchandise daily, which helped raise the store's score 15% over a 6-month period of time.
- Communicated the benefits of a Kohl's credit card and successfully processed over 50 new credit customers, helping to increase customer traffic within the store and overall improved sales and revenue.

SKILLS/ACTIVITIES

Technical: SPSS, LexisNexis, QuickBooks, Microsoft Excel (advanced), Visio, Twitter, Hootsuite, Wordpress
Languages: Spanish (fluent); German (conversational)
Interests: competing in half-marathons, photography, historical fiction

Member, GW Club Soccer, GWU, 2015-present
Member, Finance and Investments Club, GWU, 2014-present
Volunteer, DC Reads, Washington, DC, 2014-2015