

CAREER SERVICES
UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE

**Master of Business Administration
Resume & Cover Letter Guidelines**



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WHAT IS A RESUME?

A resume highlights the best and *most related* aspects of your professional and educational qualifications. It is designed to give a potential employer a positive first impression of you. In essence, your resume is your best marketing tool. The purpose of a resume is to tell an employer the specific skills and experience you have that directly relate to each job you are applying for.

BEFORE STARTING YOUR RESUME

A well-constructed and effective resume requires that background work be done before you begin writing. Begin by taking a personal inventory. Examine and define your skills, interests, accomplishments and experiences. These include professional, academic, volunteer, and internship experiences.

FORMAT

While there is no one right way to write a resume, the most useful format for students and new professionals is CHRONOLOGICAL. This format is a listing of your relevant work experience, **beginning with your most recent job first** and listing your experience in reverse order.

- **Be concise and specific.** Your resume should say the most about you in the fewest words. One page is best, though two pages are acceptable if you have enough pertinent experience.
- **Include only pertinent information.** There should be a reason for everything in your resume. Leave out personal information including age, race, and marital status. Do not feel that you need to summarize your entire job history- the purpose is to focus on the most impressive and relevant experience.
- **Use telegraphic style.** Omit personal pronouns such as "I" and "We". Example: "Designed promotional campaign to alert community of changes in regional voting guidelines."
- **Use skill and ability verbs.** Begin each statement or phrase with a descriptive verb that indicates what you accomplished in the position. See page 5 for examples.
- **Get feedback.** Have a counselor in the Career Services Center help you in designing your resume and be sure that you proofread it!

RESUME COMPONENTS

1. **Heading:** At the top of the page, include your name, address, zip code, telephone number and email address. **Be sure that your email address is professional!** If necessary, create a free account through gmail or yahoo just for job search purposes. If you live on campus, you may want to include both your campus address and a permanent address. Your phone number is very important. You must be able to be reached during the day or have a message machine to answer your calls.
2. **Career Objective (optional):** Employers often state that they skip over reading a career objective, so we normally advise clients not to include one. However, if you really believe it is crucial in applying for a specific position, be sure that it detailed and specific. It should lead the reader and direct him/her to the position you are interested in. It should include a) the action you want to do, b) the areas in which you want to do it, and c) the skills you have to contribute to that position. The rest of your resume should give concrete examples or backup your career objective.
3. **Education:** Unless you have been in the field for a number of years, the education component will precede your work experience. List your current degree, major, and year of graduation, even if you have not yet graduated. On the next line, list the college's name and location. *Do not include your high school experience.* You may also list your GPA here if it is above a 3.5, as well as any merit-based scholarships (i.e. Dean's List, honors program, etc.)
4. **Related Coursework (optional):** If you are lacking in job or internship experience, a relevant coursework section can help demonstrate your skills in a specific field. List up to three classes and give a short description of the work you completed in them. Original research is especially impressive.
5. **Related Experience:** List the most recent information first. Indicate your job title, the name of the organization, location (city and state), and dates of employment. Next, describe the specific abilities and responsibilities you assumed and acquired in bullet format. Focus on the skills that directly relate to the new position. This is where you can include on-campus involvement, volunteer and internship experience; remember, it does not have to be paid in order to count! The below list of questions will help you in creating your bullet points.
 - Did you do something faster, better, or cheaper?
 - Did you increase membership, participation, or sales?

- Did you save your organization any money or eliminate waste?
- Did you identify and/or help solve any problems?
- Did you institute any new methods, procedures, services or products?
- Did you reorganize or improve an existing system?
- Did you coordinate any event or project?
- Did you train another person? What were the results?
- Did you tutor anyone? Did his/her grades improve?

Avoid making bullet points sound like you took them directly from the job description. Instead, pack them full of accomplishments and supporting evidence. This helps employers know how you went above and beyond in your job. For example-

Before:

After:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrote reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently called on by department manager to organize monthly reports in easy-to-read language for general public
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successfully completed projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created proposal for new program to meet needs of underrepresented population, which was immediately implemented by director of outreach efforts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of interest in international relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excelled in 3 courses on the Middle-East culture and conflict with combined GPA of 3.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed books within three days of end of month for first time in company's history
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used diplomacy and programmatic knowledge to transform dissatisfied customer base, resulting in 96% referral rate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filed documents and created new forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented standardized filing system with electronic forms to assist over 200 employees in timely processing of documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed internship program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed internship program employing 50 high school students per year, improving company image and community relations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led trainings and presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered presentation on summer research project to key lead faculty and staff; department chair described project as "innovative and enlightening"

6. **Additional or Optional Headings:** Your resume should be individualized to you and best highlight your specific experience. See below for other possible headings. Place here any school or community activities that don't fit in your related experience section above.

- Volunteer Experience
- Community Service
- Professional Affiliations/Memberships
- On-Campus Involvement/Activities
- Publications and Presentations
- Honors

7. **Other Skills:** List your computer skills, including proficiency in Microsoft Office programs or any other pertinent computer programs. You can also list language abilities (i.e. working knowledge of Spanish) and certifications, including First Aid and CPR.
8. **References:** Do not use the phrase "*Available Upon Request.*" It is understood that you will provide references when you interview or when requested. References must also be professional: use professors, advisors, and previous employers for references rather than friends and family. When using someone as a reference, always get their permission first and give them a copy of your resume and job description so they are aware of your objective and direction. **If you are asking faculty members to be a reference for you, you should ask the faculty member in the beginning to middle of the semester. Do not wait until the end of the semester to request a written reference from a faculty member.**

RESUME DO'S

1. **Use high quality paper.** When you mail your resume or when you bring it to an interview, use resume quality paper (this is available for free in the Career Services office.) You may use either off white, gray, or very light beige. Avoid pastels or bright colors. Be sure to use matching paper for your cover letters.
2. **Use professional font styles.** Suggested fonts include: Arial, Times New Roman, or Helvetica. Do not use smaller than 10 point font or larger than 12 point font.
3. **Be consistent in your layout and composition.** Do not switch from sentences to phrases. Be sure that related headings are consistent in underlining, capitalization, and spacing.
4. **Verb tense.** Use past tense for jobs or experiences you have completed, and present tense to describe ongoing or current employment.
5. **Bullet points.** Arrange information in bullet points, not in paragraph form. Large dots are effective in drawing the employer's attention to competencies, accomplishments, or achievements.
6. **Limit your resume to one page, unless a second page is absolutely necessary.** You should be able to get all pertinent information on one page!
7. **Proof read your resume- spelling and grammatical errors are unacceptable!** Even one mistake can lead an employer to discount you for a position. Ask several people to review your resume for both content and grammar/spelling. If there is something they do not understand or they think needs more explanation, then there is a good chance an employer will not understand it either.

RESUME DON'TS

1. Don't use italics or fancy scripts.
2. Don't include photographs.
3. Don't put in fancy binders or folders.
4. Don't include the complete address of prior employers.
5. Don't include salary information or expectations, unless specifically requested.
6. Don't include lengthy periods of unemployment.
7. Don't exaggerate or embellish your experience.
8. Don't use slang or conjunctions.

SKILL AND ABILITY VERBS

Management Skills:

Administered	Analyzed	Assigned	Attained	Chaired
Contracted	Consolidated	Coordinated	Delegated	Developed
Directed	Evaluated	Executed	Improved	Increased
Organized	Oversaw	Planned	Prioritized	Produced
Recommended	Reviewed	Scheduled	Strengthened	Supervised

Communication Skills:

Addressed	Arbitrated	Arranged	Authored	Corresponded
Developed	Directed	Drafted	Edited	Enlisted
Formulated	Influenced	Interpreted	Mediated	Moderated
Motivated	Negotiated	Persuaded	Promoted	Publicized
Reconciled	Recruited	Spoke	Translated	Wrote

Research Skills:

Clarified	Collected	Critiqued	Diagnosed	Evaluated
Examined	Extracted	Identified	Inspected	Interpreted
Interviewed	Investigated	Organized	Reviewed	Summarized
Surveyed	Systematized			

Technical Skills:

Assembled	Built	Calculated	Computed	Designed
Devised	Engineered	Fabricated	Overhauled	Programmed
Remodeled	Repaired	Solved	Trained	Upgraded

Teaching Skills:

Adapted	Advised	Clarified	Coached	Communicated
Coordinated	Developed	Enabled	Encouraged	Evaluated
Explained	Facilitated	Guided	Informed	Initiated
Instructed	Persuaded	Set goals	Stimulated	

Financial Skills:

Administered	Allocated	Analyzed	Appraised	Audited
Balanced	Budgeted	Calculated	Computed	Developed
Forecast	Planned	Projected	Researched	

Creative Skills:

Acted	Conceptualized	Created	Designed	Developed
Directed	Established	Fashioned	Founded	Illustrated
Instituted	Integrated	Introduced	Invented	Originated
Performed	Planned	Revitalized	Shaped	

Helping Skills:

Assessed	Clarified	Coached	Counseled	Demonstrated
Diagnosed	Educated	Expedited	Facilitated	Familiarized
Guided	Referred	Rehabilitated	Represented	

Clerical or Detail Skills:

Approved	Arranged	Catalogued	Classified	Collected
Compiled	Dispatched	Executed	Generated	Implemented
Inspected	Monitored	Operated	Organized	Prepared
Processed	Purchased	Recorded	Retrieved	Screened
Specified	Systematized	Tabulated	Validated	

MBA Resume Template

Insert contact info
into a heading

NAME

Current Address*Permanent Address (if applicable)*Phone Number*Email address

Only bold your
degree info

If you have not graduated yet, put the
month/year you will obtain your degree

Month/Year

Education

(Degree) Ex. Master of Business Administration

(Specialization) Ex. Supply Chain Management

School, City, State

- GPA (only if 3.5 or higher)

Related Coursework: List a few relevant courses, projects, and or original research

Any additional degrees completed

Awards/Honors

List Award- explain award's purpose

Reverse
chronological,
recent to oldest

Related Experience

Title

Company Name, City, State

- List all job accomplishments starting with powerful action verbs. **Try to stay away from "Responsible for..." "Assisted with..." or Maintained..."** These are very common phrases and communicate that you did less impressive work than you probably did.
- Do not use more than 5 bullet points.

Month,Yr – Month,Yr

Internship Experience

Title

Company Name, City, State

•

Month, Yr – Month, Yr

Other Work Experience – Any other work experience that may not be relevant, but demonstrates transferable skills, i.e. communication skills, interpersonal, research & planning, organization, etc.

On Campus Involvement

Title

Club Name

- Be sure to describe the club if the title is not self-explanatory
- Include transferrable skills you learned in this position

Month,Yr – Month, Yr

Volunteer/Community Service

Title

Company Name, City, State

•

Additional Headings
Professional Affiliations
Leadership
Professional Licenses
Certifications
Training & Development
Specialized Skills

Certifications (only if directly related or applicable to the job you are applying to)

Additional Skills

Computer skills (Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel)

Language skills (Fluent in Spanish)

References

NAME

Current Address

Permanent Address (if applicable)

Phone Number

Email address

REFERENCES

Name

Title

Company

City, State

Phone Number

Email

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State

Email

Name

Title

Company

City, State

Phone Number

Email

Tom Brooks

1524 Flower Ave
La Verne, CA 91750
909-593-3511
Tom.Brooks@laverne.edu

Example Chronological General Business Resume

Education

Master of Business Administration

May 2010

University of La Verne

La Verne, CA

Relevant Coursework:

Accounting Fundamentals, Business Management, Analysis of Business Operations

Bachelor of Arts, Business Administration

January 2008

University of La Verne

La Verne, CA

Honors/Awards

Dean's list, Eastman-Rice Persuasive Speaking Competition-First place, Service Merchandise Business Scholarship

Related Experience

Management Assistant

January 2010 – Present

S & L Associates

Ontario, CA

- Implement computerized accounting and recall systems for optometric practice, increasing accounts receivable by \$9,000 and appointment recall by 30%.
- Author computer and specialty software user's manual.
- Train and supervise staff in computer usage and troubleshooting methods, saving practice 10 staff-hours and \$100 in materials monthly.
- Calculate prospective co-payment schedules.

International Market Research Assistant

May 2008 – January 2010

Sellers Advertising & Marketing

La Verne, CA

- Conducted online and telephone research to identify new international business prospects.
- Identified 15 German-based companies that could save 35% in advertising costs.
- Created prospective client database for company to target.

Internship Experience

Demographics Intern

August 2007 – January 2008

Strong Demographics

Riverside, CA

- Designed and presented demographic software demonstrations.
- Researched customer income and spending, indentifying high-growth markets for clients.
- Delivered presentation on summer research project to key lead faculty and staff.

Other Work Experience

Administrative Assistant

August 2005 – May 2007

DLT Finance

Riverside, CA

- Answered calls for five staff members and routed calls using a ten line phone system
- Created and implemented streamlined electronic filing process, eliminating departmental use of paper files
- Scheduled and confirmed over 30 weekly appointments for three staff members

Additional Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point

Tips for a Great Cover Letter

- Make sure it is well-written and meaningful: employers will use a cover letter to measure your writing ability.
- Include the heading from your resume and references page for a uniform look.
- Address the letter to a specific person. If you don't know their name, call the company and ask for it (be sure you get the correct spelling and gender). If no one can provide it for you, address your letter as "Dear Title" (i.e. "Dear Director of Marketing" or "Dear Finance Manager").
- Tailor each cover letter to each company: show the employer why you want to work specifically for them.
- Back up every statement with concrete evidence.
- Show that you know the skills you have to offer - and that these skills match exactly what the employer is looking for.
- Keep it simple and to the point-1 page only!
- Ask for action.

Name
475 Stanford Dr., Arcadia, CA 91007
(909) 593-3511
name@name.com

Company Name
Address

Dear (name of hiring supervisor),

As a current Master of Business Administration student with experience working with people from diverse backgrounds, I demonstrate the skills needed to contribute to the success of (Company Name). I am writing to express my interest in the position of Financial Advisor because of my knowledge of your company's success in (address the company's mission or goals).

Financial Background:

My strong academic background in finance and management allowed me to excel during a year-long internship for one of my hometown credit unions. During the internship, I was excited to be able to apply many of the qualitative and quantitative methods acquired in school to real world financial situations. In addition, as part of my degree coursework, I also studied the interrelationships among the various functional business disciplines, including how to analyze cash flows, acquisitions and mergers and international financial systems.

Communication Skills and Negotiation:

As a result of two years of experience working with consumers via phones and emails, and negotiating with consumers as well as supply manufacturers, my communication and negotiation skills have been strengthened and sharpened. As an intern and previous Sales Associate, I became adept in developing alternative language and resolving disagreements during negotiations with customers, partners, and vendors.

Thank you for the consideration and taking your valuable time to review my resume. I'll follow up with you in a few days to answer any preliminary questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Name

A. Why write a cover letter?

A resume only explains all of your previous academic training and professional skills. A cover letter:

1. Summarizes how that academic training and professional skills will directly benefit them.
2. Explains desire- why you want the job.

B. Employers often only skim the first paragraph.

Be sure to include a summary of:

1. What you bring to the table (education & experience)
2. Why you want the job (desire)

C. Back up your first paragraph with detailed evidence of your claims.

Give 1-2 specific examples of where you earned/demonstrated these skills.

D. Be sure to state skills that are especially pertinent to each employer.

Use the job description to help you understand what employers are looking for in each position. It is your job to convince an employer why they need you.

E. Isn't this a long letter?

A cover letter can be 1-4 paragraphs. A briefer letter would only include the first and last paragraphs.

F. Do employers really read cover letters?

Yes! The real question isn't *if* but *when* do employers read cover letters? Think about how you sort through a stack of information. First, you'd probably skim the resume and first paragraph of the cover letter to sort candidates into 'yes', 'no' and 'maybe' piles. The second time through, you'd read everything closely to whittle down your 'yes' pile to 3-5 strong candidates to invite to interview.

G. Will a cover letter really make a difference?

Yes, because it makes your argument about how you can contribute to their organization. Those without cover letters have to hope that the employer can figure that out. A cover letter proves that you know what you have to offer and that you can communicate it!