

# CAREER SERVICES CENTER RÉSUMÉ WRITING

## WHAT IS IT?

The résumé is essentially a summary of your experiences and a reflection of how those experiences have tailored you to become the ideal candidate for a job. This guide will help you write and edit your résumé according to School of Management standards.

## FORMATTING: KEY TIPS

- Make the résumé no longer than one page.
- Maintain margins at an even distance all around the page if you can. A margin of 0.5 inches (“Narrow” setting in Word) is ideal. The margins should not be less than 0.3 inches.
- Be consistent with font styles, sizes, spacing and alignment. Font sizes should be no smaller than 10. Consistency is king!
- Be sure you are using space effectively. Too much white space makes it appear as if you don’t have much to say or offer.
- Check the sample résumés in the office for formatting examples.

## OBJECTIVES

Objectives are optional. If you choose to include one, make sure it is *tailored specifically* to the employer and position you are applying for.

- **DO** specify the employer and position:  
“To obtain a summer internship at PricewaterhouseCoopers that applies and furthers my knowledge of the accounting industry by gaining exposure to audit practices.”
- **DO NOT** use a general objective: “To obtain an internship in the field of (industry name here) that will utilize my skills and develop me professionally.”

## EDUCATION

Here is a standard format that you can use on your résumé:

### **Binghamton University, State University of New York**

Bachelor of Science in Accounting: Expected May 2012

Concentrations in Finance and Marketing

Cumulative GPA: 3.85/4.00, Major GPA: 3.83/4.00

**TIP!** If you need another line on your résumé elsewhere and you can fit your concentrations on the same line as your degree, feel free to place them after your major and before your graduation date.

**TIP!** Place the higher GPA first on the line, but ensure that you specify which GPA it is. Round your GPA to the nearest hundredth and keep this rounding consistent for both GPAs. Always specify the maximum GPA possible, as some schools may use a scale higher than 4.00.

**TIP!** Relevant coursework, other institutions and study abroad can be placed in this section. For coursework, be selective and concise; only choose courses that demonstrate your knowledge of the field. For other institutions, format according to the standard listed above, without the bold effect. Study-abroad experiences can simply include the institution and dates attended.

**TIP!** Awards and honors such as Dean’s List or an honors program can be listed along with your education information. Keep your awards relevant and timely!

## EXPERIENCE

This section highlights either your job experience or activities. To effectively communicate your experience, you want your bullet points to encompass the three following aspects:

- **WHAT:** Start your bullet point with a strong action verb. Refer to the list of action verbs available in the office. Thesaurus.com is also your friend, and will help you avoid using the same action verb twice!
- **HOW:** What skills did you use? What tools did you use? After your action verb, elaborate on how you accomplished something. Transition words for the “how” aspect would include “by,” “through,” “utilizing” and more. Example: “Secured executive accounts by acting as a firm liaison and effectively communicating contract details . . .”
- **WHY:** What was the final outcome? Why did you do what you did, and what was the point? Discuss your goals and results to complete your statement. Transition words for the “why” aspect include “to,” “resulting in,” “achieving,” “accomplishing” and more. Example: “Secured executive client accounts by effectively communicating contract details, **resulting in** account stability and stronger client-firm relationships.”

**TIP!** You can separate jobs from activities, or combine them and call the section “Relevant Experience.”

**TIP!** If you want to highlight your leadership positions in your jobs/activities, you can create a separate section titled “Leadership,” but make sure you highlight the activities that emphasize your leadership skills.

**TIP!** Each job/activity experience should contain at least two bullet points. If you can’t make two strong statements about it, then it will appear as if you gained little to nothing from the experience.

**TIP!** It isn’t absolutely necessary to include all three aspects of a strong bullet point if it causes you to be too wordy. Keep it concise by

highlighting either the HOW or WHY. If you choose just one of the two, make sure the bullet point can stand on its own as a separate fact.

**TIP!** Quantify results when possible. Employers love seeing numbers on résumés!

**TIP!** List your experiences in reverse chronological order, but keep relevance as a priority over timeline. If you have an experience that is more relevant to the position, create a “Relevant Experience” section on the top of your page to highlight the experience(s).

## SKILLS, INTERESTS

Specify your experience level, then list the languages or programs that you have experience with.

*Language:* Skill levels include “conversational,” “proficient” and “fluent.” (If you only have “knowledge of” a language, it’s likely that you don’t know enough to communicate with a client in that language, so leave it out.)

*Computer:* Skill levels include “knowledge of,” “proficient” and “experienced user of.”

Certifications can be included in the skills section as well. If you have room on your résumé, feel free to list your interests, but keep the list short! One line is ideal.

## LAST-MINUTE TIPS!

- Proofread your résumé! Get it critiqued at SOM Career Services or CDC, and ask others to read it before you send it to an employer.
- Save your résumé as a PDF or Microsoft Word document, or both, to ensure formatting stays precise.
- Print on résumé paper, preferably with shades of off-white or beige.
- Know everything on your résumé, inside and out. Don’t be caught off guard when asked a question regarding a point you made on your résumé!