

University of San Diego
School of Business Administration
Resume Writing & Format Guidelines

Purpose:

The School of Business Administration provides a standard format for student resumes that will appear in school publications targeted to recruiters. The style guidelines have been developed to ensure that resumes distributed to recruiters are professional and consistent looking, and to reduce the amount of time it takes recruiters to find relevant information about students

Formatting:

- Font: Times New Roman
- Size & Style:
 - Top heading (name) – 13 point, bold, all caps;
 - Section headings – 12 point, bold, upper/lower case;
 - University and employer titles – 11 point, bold, upper/lower case;
 - Job titles – 11 point, italicized;
 - Body text – 11 point;
 - Latin words (example: *Magna Cum Laude*) – italicized.
- Margins: ½ inch margin on all sides.
- Indentation:
 - Content of sections are indented one inch from the outer margin. This is to allow dates in the Work Experience – which are not indented – to stand out for quick identification by recruiters;
 - Bullet points are aligned directly below the first letter of the sentence heading the section;
 - Indentation between the bullet point and the start of the sentence is ¼ inch.

While it is acceptable for working professionals to have a two page resume, business schools cap the length of student resumes at one page. Students are strongly encouraged to use the full page, and avoid leaving white space at the bottom.

Name/Address Section:

- The information in this top section should be centered, with the name capitalized in bold, 13 point font.
- It is permissible to show a professional designation after the name (such as “Jane Huang, CPA”). Terminal degrees may also be indicated here (Ph.D.; M.D., etc.), however, bachelor’s and master’s degrees should not be listed in this space.
- Multiple phone numbers may be indicated, though students are encouraged to list only their preferred contact telephone number (cell, home, or work).

Education Section:

- The education section is listed before work experience in a business school resume. Many professionals switch the order and move the education section to the end when they are no longer in school.
- Honors, student leadership positions, volunteer work, grade point average, and GMAT score may be listed using bullet point formatting in this section.
- The GPA can be listed if it is 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale (or comparable, on a different scale). A GMAT score can be included if it is 700 or higher. These guidelines are based on feedback provided by recruiters.

Work Experience Section:

- All work experience should be in reverse chronological order, with the most recent experience listed first.
- Indicate dates of employment in terms of years, not months/years. This format allows recruiters to get a snapshot of work duration without having their attention drawn to brief gaps in employment.
- The American-style business school resume is results-driven. Each bullet point should start with an action verb (see list of action verbs) and highlight an accomplishment.
- Always describe results in the context of your contribution to the effort. For example, when highlighting a team accomplishment, frame the bullet point around the contribution you made that helped the team to achieve the outcome.
- A helpful framework for highlighting accomplishments is S-T-A-R (Situation/Task, Action, Result). Succinctly describe the situation or task you faced, the action you took, and the result you achieved in each case.
- Bullet points should be no more than two sentences long. One sentence is preferable.
- One line space should separate each employment experience. It is not necessary to repeat the company name line when listing multiple positions within the same organization.
- Descriptive statements about the employer or job title should only be included if they are used to illustrate a personal accomplishment.
- Do not use the first person – “I” or “we” – to describe the actions taken.
- Prioritize and order bullets to highlight attributes that will be most important to the recruiters you wish to impress. Draw attention to the most impressive and relevant accomplishments by listing those bullet points first.

Additional Data Section:

- This section allows recruiters to get insight into the personality, interests, and character of the candidate.
- USD students have the flexibility to customize this heading, with words that are descriptive of the supplemental information provided in the section.
- Options for titling this section include: “Interests”; “Community Service”, “Skills”, and Awards.
- Highlight hobbies, interests, language fluency and experiences that honestly reflects who you are as a person and can serve as interesting conversation starters in an interview situation.

Sample List of Action Verbs

Accomplished	Delivered	Invented	Restored
Achieved	Demonstrated	Investigated	Revamped
Acquired	Designed	Launched	Reviewed
Adapted	Developed	Liquidated	Revised
Addressed	Devised	Located	Revived
Administered	Directed	Maintained	Saved
Allocated	Discovered	Managed	Secured
Analyzed	Documented	Marketed	Selected
Arbitrated	Doubled	Mediated	Served
Arranged	Earned	Minimized	Settled
Assembled	Edited	Mobilized	Set-up
Assisted	Eliminated	Modernized	Shaped
Attained	Enforced	Modified	Showed
Audited	Engineered	Monitored	Simplified
Began	Established	Motivated	Sold
Balanced	Enforced	Negotiated	Solved
Broadened	Engineered	Obtained	Sponsored
Brought	Established	Operated	Staffed
Budgeted	Evaluated	Organized	Standardized
Built	Examined	Originated	Started
Calculate	Executed	Overcame	Stimulated
Centralized	Expanded	Performed	Streamlined
Changed	Expedited	Pinpointed	Strengthened
Clarified	Explained	Planned	Stretched
Collaborated	Forecasted	Prepared	Structured
Combined	Formed	Presented	Studied
Communicated	Formulated	Prevented	Suggested
Completed	Founded	Processed	Summarized
Complied	Gathered	Produced	Supervised
Composed	Generated	Programmed	Supported
Conceived	Guided	Projected	Surveyed
Concluded	Hired	Promoted	Sustained
Condensed	Implemented	Proposed	Tailored
Consolidated	Improved	Provided	Taught
Contracted	Increased	Published	Tested
Contributed	Influenced	Realized	Traded
Controlled	Influenced	Recommended	Trained
Converted	Initiated	Reconciled	Transacted
Coordinated	Installed	Recruited	Transferred
Corrected	Instituted	Reduced	Trimmed
Created	Integrated	Reorganized	Uncovered
Cultivated	Interpreted	Reported	Undertook
Cut	Interviewed	Researched	Utilized
Decreased	Introduced	Resolved	Verified