



# Notre Dame MBA Résumé Guide

Graduate Business Career Services

## YOUR RÉSUMÉ

Writing a résumé is a critical step in a successful job search strategy. Your résumé is your one-page personal selling tool, and it may be the first impression you make with a potential employer. Writing your résumé also provides you with an opportunity to assess your professional and personal experiences and think about what you accomplished, why you made the decisions you did, what you liked (or didn't like) about your choices, and how this all plays into your career search going forward.

**Ultimately, your résumé has one job: get you an interview.**

For that reason, it is imperative that you spend some time to make your résumé as strong as possible. Here are some things to think about as you write your résumé:

- **Track Record of Success.** With a résumé, your goal is to show that you have a track record of achieving big things and making the places you've been better. As a result, your résumé should be focused on **achievements** (things you accomplished and/or ways in which you added value to your organizations) rather than on responsibilities (things you were responsible for). Bring your best!
- **Relevant Highlights.** A résumé is not a job description, nor is it a summary of everything you've ever done. A good résumé is more about where you are going than where you have been. It is important to closely link your past experience to the requirements of the job you are seeking and place emphasis on the parts of your experience that are most applicable.
- **Transferrable Skills.** Employers want to know that you are capable of doing what they need, especially if you did not hold a similar job in the past. So you want to sell your transferable skills – that is, core skills that can transfer across various jobs, fields, and careers. Examples include managing people, analyzing data, leading teams, creativity, communicating and presenting, and problem-solving.
- **Key Competencies.** Companies with formal recruiting programs compile a list of behaviors, technical skills, and thinking and decision-making styles that are common among their top performers and required for a given position (e.g., “oral communication”, “managing others”, and “initiative”). They use these criteria to evaluate candidates when sorting through résumés and conducting interviews.

## GETTING STARTED

Here's what you'll need to get started working on your résumé:

- **Inspiration.** Collect your thoughts and revisit your accomplishments by looking at past documents, such as:
  - Business school applications and essays
  - Previous résumés
  - Performance evaluations
  - Project reports from work
- **ND MBA Résumé Template.** Download a Word version of the résumé template [here](#).
- **This Résumé Guide.** Review the remaining pages of this guide for tips on creating a high-impact MBA résumé.

## WHY A RÉSUMÉ TEMPLATE?

Most (if not all) top MBA programs ask students to use a specific résumé template, and those templates tend to look very similar. Why?

**Because your résumé should be about the content.**

Using a template means you don't have to spend your time worrying about things like which sections go where, page margins, formatting, etc. Instead, you can spend your time making your content as strong as possible.

Our recruiting partners are also familiar with, and like, our résumé template. The structure makes each résumé easy to read, and they know exactly where to look to find the things they're looking for. In that sense, deviating from the résumé template comes with some degree of risk—and that's something you generally want to avoid.

## WHY A SINGLE PAGE?

Recruiters expect MBA candidates to have a one-page résumé, for several reasons:

- It shows you can be concise (by keeping your résumé short)
- It shows you can be strategic (by smartly choosing what stays...and what goes)
- It shows you're focused on the reader—and not yourself (by only including content relevant to him or her)
- It remains the industry standard for top MBA programs.

Because they have limited time, and have to review so many résumé, some employers are very rigid about this. For example, based on feedback from dozens of Fortune 100 recruiting partners, the MBA Veterans Conference website automatically rejects résumé that are longer than a single page. Many companies have similar policies. CVs can be shared if asked for, but rarely do you see this in the MBA space.

Finally, a one-page résumé is much easier to manage and hand out when meeting people in person. You don't want to be the only candidate handing out two-sided (or, worse yet, stapled) résumés to potential employers. Again, in this regard, deviating from the template comes with some degree of risk.

## RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVIATING FROM THE TEMPLATE

As previously mentioned, deviating from the résumé template comes with some degree of risk. That works against your goal as a job seeker, which is to eliminate as much risk from the process as possible.

Choosing to deviate from the template may communicate less-than-desirable attributes to a potential employer. When this goes wrong, it can go really wrong. A recent ND MBA grad decided to take a different approach with his résumé while working through the job search process, and didn't have a lot of success. A recruiter from Procter & Gamble found his approach especially questionable and shared this feedback with the Career Services team:

*“He won't be getting an interview, in large part because of the résumé. The format definitely stood out, but not in the way that he may have hoped. Honestly, what it said to me was: This guy has trouble accepting advice that an idea of his needs to be improved. It came off as a lack of self-awareness and/or lack of collaboration with experts.”*

This MBA student eliminated himself as a candidate before interviewing for the role by positioning himself as a somebody who may be hard to work with. That's certainly not what he intended, but once you hit “send” on a resume, there's no telling how your audience will receive it. That's why it's best to eliminate risk whenever possible.

MBA/MSBA, 5 year student representative education section at end of guide

**Margins:**  
 • 0.5-1.0 inches on all sides

**Font:**  
 • Times New Roman  
 • 14-pt for name  
 • 10.5-12-pt for other content

**Janet Q. Sample**  
 www.linkedin.com/in/janetqsample

43 Fischer Graduate Residences, Apt. 1-A  
 Notre Dame, IN 46556

574-331-1931  
 jsample@nd.edu

**Section Titles:**  
 • Bold  
 • Underlined

**Education**

**University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business** Notre Dame, IN  
 Master of Business Administration, Marketing concentration May 2020

- Earned Forte MBA Fellowship
- 710 GMAT / 3.8 GPA
- Consulting Club Member

**University of Kansas** Lawrence, KS  
 Bachelor of Arts, Economics, *magna cum laude* May 2012

- Member of Varsity Soccer Team

**School Names:**  
 • Bold

**Experience**

**Viking Media Group** (*End to end technology solutions for European Broadcasters*) Chicago, IL  
 Finance Manager 2016-2018

- Led three-person team through reporting and analysis on \$1.9 B in 2016 broadcast revenue; presented key insights during business reviews, budget updates, and Investor Relations calls
- Created weekly revenue flash analyses on quarterly revenue of \$500 MM+ for CFO and CEO; analyzed industry trends and identified risks/opportunities for Viking Media Group
- Built advanced Excel models to automate financial reporting process and sold approach to leaders across five departments—decreased time required for monthly analysis by 95%
- Managed campus recruiting program for broader finance team; hosted recruiting events; conducted interviews at five universities to secure new talent for organization

**Dates/Places:**  
 • Align Right  
 (all other content left)

**Senior Financial Analyst** 2014-2016

- Developed and pitched proposal to senior leaders designed to integrate parallel teams as part of re-organization—generated \$4.1 MM in savings and maintained 85% headcount retention
- Coordinated cross-functional financial forecasting process for 5-year strategic plan; aligned business proposals from four different business units with firm’s strategic and financial goals
- Directed in-depth white-space analysis leveraging competitive intelligence and macro trends in Europe to identify ROI-positive promotional opportunities for Viking’s Top 20 clients

**Truman Planetarium** Kansas City, MO  
 Coordinator, Leadership Board and Major Gifts 2012-2014

- Designed and implemented strategies increasing charitable gifts by 32% vs. previous year
- Led cross-functional team through planning and execution of all aspects of planetarium’s largest fundraising program—raised over 20% of organization’s annual revenue for FY2013
- Formulated and executed innovative marketing tactics targeting key customers—boosted revenue by 49% from ticket sales, 20% from event donations, and 11% from raffles/auctions

**Achievements and Interests**

- Received Viking’s “Simply Excellent” Award for Business Partnership and Leadership, 2016
- Finished Chicago Marathon, 2013
- Hobbies include international travel, dogs, cooking, and boxing
- Permanent Work Authorization: United States

Blank Lines Between All Section Titles, New Sections, and Jobs



## KEY RESUME ATTRIBUTES

### Overall:

- Font type: Times New Roman
- Font size for Body: 10.5 - 12-pt
- Margins: 0.5 – 1.0 inches on all sides
- Blank space between all sections titles, new sections, and new jobs

### Alignment:

- Content: Align Left
- Dates/Places: Align Right

### Education Section:

- Listing Clubs under Education: list all on one line preferably
- GMAT optional: recommend only if 700 or above, do not include Q/V scores
- GPA optional
- Bullets under “Education”: no more than 3
- Graduate with honors: put on same line as degree in lower case and italics (i.e. *summa cum laude*)

### Experience Section:

- Description of company, if needed: Same line of company name, in parentheses and in italics.
- No sub bullets
- Dates: Months not required with years unless same year (i.e. 2016 - 2017, Apr 2017 - July 2017)
- Promotions: if listed, should be placed last within the appropriate section

### Achievement and Interests Section:

- Bullets under “Achievements and Interests”: no more than 4
- Work authorization: not required, encouraged if there is unique work authorization

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

The diagram shows a resume header with the following elements:

- Full Name:** Janet Sample
- LinkedIn URL:** [www.linkedin.com/in/janetqqsample](http://www.linkedin.com/in/janetqqsample)
- School Email Address:** jsample@nd.edu
- Preferred Phone Number:** 574-331-1931

Callouts indicate that the LinkedIn URL should be customized and that the school email address is the preferred one.

The diagram shows a resume header with the following elements:

- Full Name:** Janet Q. Sample
- LinkedIn URL:** [www.linkedin.com/in/janetqqsample](http://www.linkedin.com/in/janetqqsample)
- Address:** 43 Fischer Graduate Residences, Apt. 1-A, Notre Dame, IN 46556
- Phone Number:** 574-331-1931
- School Email Address:** jsample@nd.edu

- If you chose to include address, best practice is school address
- Keep the header balanced with the information that you do provide

## EDUCATION

- Start with your Notre Dame MBA
- Listing your concentration(s) is optional, but encouraged
- Include no more than 3 bullets to show achievement and/or involvement as a student

### **Education**

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**University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business** Notre Dame, IN  
Master of Business Administration candidate, Marketing concentration May 2020

- Earned Forte MBA Fellowship
- 710 GMAT / 3.8 GPA
- Consulting Club Member

**University of Kansas** Lawrence, KS  
Bachelor of Arts, Economics May 2012

- Graduate Magna Cum Laude
- Member of Varsity Soccer Team

- List other degrees in reverse chronological order (i.e., most recent at top)
- Include no more than 2 bullets to show achievement and/or involvement as a student
- Don't overshadow your MBA entry (i.e., don't give the impression that you were super involved as an undergrad...and only go to class as an MBA)

### **Not sure what to include for your Education entries?**

Again, your goal is to show a track record of success, so highlight things that show achievement and/or engagement as a student. Some things to consider include the following:

- GMAT optional, recommend including only if score is 700 or higher, but no Q/V scores
- GPA is also optional
- Academic Distinctions (Dean's List, cum laude, etc.)
- Merit-based awards/fellowships – do not include money amount
- Involvement with significant student clubs/activities but recommend listing on one line

This section will evolve during your time as a student, so don't worry about including things like "Consulting Club Member" during the first semester of your first year. Recruiters just want to see that you're doing what you can to get involved, learn more about your preferred career path, and prepare yourself to be successful within it.

## EXPERIENCE

- Shoot for 3-4 high-impact bullet points per role
- Try to keep individual bullet points to 1-2 lines; but 3 is ok

### Experience

#### Viking Media Group Finance Manager

Chicago, IL  
2016-2018

- Led three-person team through reporting and analysis on \$1.9 B in 2016 broadcast revenue; presented key insights during business reviews, budget updates, and Investor Relations calls
- Created weekly revenue flash analyses on quarterly revenue of \$500 MM+ for CFO and CEO; analyzed industry trends and identified risks/opportunities for Viking Media Group
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#### Senior Financial Analyst

2014-2016

- Developed and pitched proposal to senior leaders designed to integrate parallel teams as part of re-organization—generated \$4.1 MM in savings and maintained 85% headcount retention
- Coordinated cross-functional financial forecasting process for 5-year strategic plan; aligned business proposals from four different business units with firm's strategic and financial goals
- Directed in-depth white-space analysis leveraging competitive intelligence and macro trends in Europe to identify ROI-positive promotional opportunities for Viking's Top 20 clients

- Unless you have a compelling reason to do so, you generally don't need to include months

- Bullet points should start with strong action verbs (Led, Managed, Developed, etc.)
- All bullet points should be in past tense (unless you will still be in the role as a student)

## WRITING STRONG RÉSUMÉ BULLET POINTS

Writing bullet points for the Experience section is where you will spend most of your time when working on your résumé. As you review past accomplishments, think of everything you've done in terms of "stories":

- What was the **problem you addressed**?
- What **actions did you take**?
- What were the **results of your actions**?

Structuring your résumé in this way will help the document be more achievement-oriented and will also prepare you to speak succinctly about your experiences in interviews.

Thinking in terms of stories and results will also help you avoid a résumé that reads like a generalized job description (e.g., "Responsible for purchasing, logistics and distribution"). You need specifics – numbers, percentages, details – that show results and communicate how well you performed (e.g., "Managed and led a team of six in cost reduction initiatives that reduced labor costs by 12%, overtime by 24% and material waste by 43%").

Even if the reader doesn't have experience in your particular industry or function, you want him or her to be able to tell that you did something significant...and that the organization was better off because you were part of it.

## ACHIEVEMENTS & INTERESTS

### Achievements and Interests

- Received Viking’s “Simply Excellent” Award for Business Partnership and Leadership, 2016
- Finished Chicago Marathon, 2013
- Hobbies include international travel, dogs, cooking, and boxing
- Permanent Work Authorization: United States

This section rounds you out as an individual, beyond your professional and educational accomplishments. Things you include in this section can help form a good first impression, and it’s not uncommon for recruiters to ask interview questions about your achievements and/or interests.

Some tips for this section:

- This is a good place to include language abilities, dual or international citizenship, community service, professional memberships or societies, extracurricular activities, and unique interests.
- Whenever possible, list specific interests. For example, instead of “music and hiking,” write “play classical guitar; avid High Sierras backpacker.”
- Avoid repeating information that appeared elsewhere in your résumé.
- Include your work authorization status so employers understand any sponsorship needs you may have.
- Do not include personal or family information (marital status, birth date, etc.) .

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



**VMock Smart Résumé Platform.** Our team will provide you with additional details regarding VMock’s virtual résumé review tool at a later date. After uploading your résumé, VMock will evaluate it in three areas (Impact, Presentation, and Competencies) and even provide bullet point-level feedback to help you make your résumé stronger.



**185 Powerful Verbs That Will Make Your Resume Awesome.** [Follow this link](#) to view the list (courtesy of themuse.com).



### ND Graduate Business Career Services Team Contact Info:

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Notre Dame, IN 46556

574-331-1931

**Degree:**

- Do not use all abbreviations, i.e. MBA/MSBA

**Education**

**University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business**

Master of Business Administration/MS in Business Analytics candidate

Notre Dame, IN

May 2020

- Earned Forte MBA Fellowship
- 710 GMAT / 3.8 GPA
- Consulting Club Member

**University of Kansas**

Bachelor of Arts, Economics, *magna cum laude*

Lawrence, KS

May 2012

- Member of Varsity Soccer Team

ND MBA/ND Undergrad Dual EDUCATION EXAMPLE

**Janet Q. Sample**

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Notre Dame, IN 46556

574-331-1931  
jsample@nd.edu

**Education**

**University of Notre Dame, Mendoza College of Business**

Master of Business Administration

Notre Dame, IN

May 2020

- Earned Forte MBA Fellowship
- 710 GMAT / 3.8 GPA
- Consulting Club Member

**University of Notre Dame**

Bachelor of Science, Chemistry

Notre Dame, IN

May 2020

- TA for Organic Chemistry I
- 3.9 major GPA

Have separate listings for both your MBA and undergraduate degree

### **Corporate Finance/Investment Banking**

- Completion of Training the Street modules if applicable; list in Achievements and Interests
- Any other outside coursework such as Wall Street Prep or online courses that support the move to Finance; list in Achievements and Interests
- In a previous non-finance job, use bullets that tap into finance-like duties, such as budgeting, forecasting, performance tracking (eg. in operations or engineering positions)
- Do not forget designations completed or in progress such as CPA, CFA, CFP, etc.; list in Achievements and Interests

### **General Management**

- Use bullets to tap into leadership (formal or informal) experience, show working across disciplines and functions
- Examples of managing projects or leading teams useful as bullets, especially for LDPs

### **Marketing:**

- Use bullets to demonstrate any experience with segmentation strategies, consumer insights, Nielsen or IRI analysis, i.e. specific marketing skills.