

CAREER TOOLKIT

RESUME ESSENTIALS

RESUME ESSENTIALS

RESUME FORMAT

COVER LETTER ESSENTIALS

INFORMATIONAL CONVERSATIONS GUIDE

SAMPLE EMAILS FOR REQUESTING INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

LINKED IN ESSENTIALS

ASKING A COMPANY CONTACT FOR HELP

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE INTERVIEWER

BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS



Your résumé is...

- ▶ **NOT** your autobiography;
- ▶ **NOT** just a list of job descriptions.

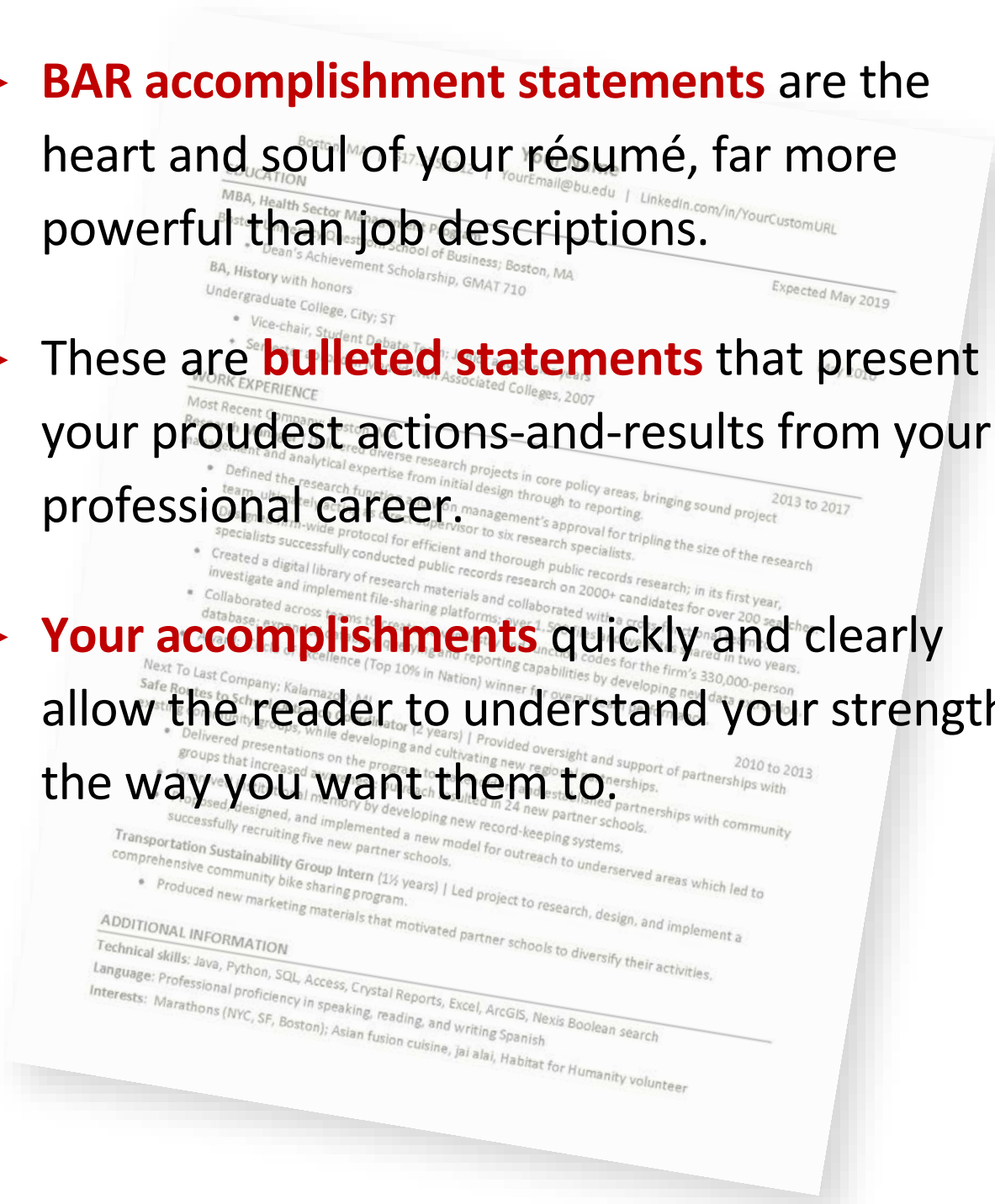
Your résumé **IS**:

- ▶ the most important information about you that is **relevant to your target reader**.
- ▶ a presentation of your accomplishments that clearly articulate your **value and the impact you have made**.
- ▶ a means of communicating your **skills** rather than just your experience.

Complete Your Resume

- **Resume Template:** Like most top business schools, Questrom uses a standard [MBA Resume Format](#) that presents your candidacy in an easy to read, consistent form. Employers require Questrom formatted resumes for your default resume on MBA Focus and inclusion in the digital employer resume book. Please read the [BU MBA Resume Essentials – Class of 2018](#) before starting your resume. We recommend typing your information directly into the template to ensure consistent formatting.
- **Resume Updates:** You will likely update your resume throughout your time at Questrom as you start new activities and complete your internship. Each time you make changes to your resume, upload the new version to MBA Focus, and make sure to email your Career Coach to ask them to approve it in the system.

- ▶ **BAR accomplishment statements** are the heart and soul of your résumé, far more powerful than job descriptions.
- ▶ These are **bulleted statements** that present your proudest actions-and-results from your professional career.
- ▶ **Your accomplishments** quickly and clearly allow the reader to understand your strengths the way you want them to.



BAR STATEMENTS



- ▶ **BACKGROUND:** Provides context if the situation isn't self-explanatory.
- ▶ **ACTION:** The proactive steps you took.
- ▶ **RESULT:** The successful outcome, *quantified* whenever possible.
- ▶ Choose professional accomplishments and events that you are proud of.
- ▶ Pick only the Best-of-the-Best...think "Greatest Hits".
- ▶ An excellent resource would likely be your Annual Performance Reviews.

BAR STATEMENTS



BACKGROUND

Explain under what circumstances or conditions you did the work. Use phrases such as, "within tight time frames," "while department staffing level was at 50%," "took on additional responsibilities while maintaining current workload."

ACTION

Discuss how you executed the accomplishment, what you did, and the strengths you used. Be specific and use strong action verbs, such as "exceeded," "planned," or "developed." Avoid the weak phrase "responsible for... ". Suggestions are available [here](#).

RESULTS

Show the business impact of your actions. Include deliverables, metrics, and contributions from your company's perspective. Sometimes, to determine the result, think of what would have happened if you HAD NOT done a competent job.

BAR STATEMENTS



Duties & Responsibilities	vs.	Accomplishments
Responsible for sales in the Eastern region.		Led a team of three account executives and two support analysts; produced \$5 million in new revenue, exceeding goal by 75 %.
As HR Manager, duties included saving money on corporate benefits.		Saved 15% over previous years by researching life insurance providers and signing contract with local supplier.

BAR STATEMENTS



First Draft	vs.	Stronger Edit
Completed project ahead of schedule.		Completed an IT project ahead of schedule and \$2K under budget.
Proven track record for system sales.		Sold enterprise software solutions that generated over \$15,000 in additional revenue per month.
Recognized as effective manager.		Promoted three times in five years; as a supervisor, was rated in top 25% for last two years.

Example Situation

Background

Company experienced customer complaints from valued customers (20 complaints per month).

Action

Established hotline to handle customer inquiries.

Purchased and implemented CRM software to track and resolve complaints.

Negotiated new benefits package to enhance job flexibility and content.

Result

Decreased customer complaints by 33% and product returns by 45%.

(continued)

BAR STATEMENTS



The previous situation delivered in two BAR statements:

- “Decreased customer complaints 33% by successfully establishing a hot-line to handle inquiries.”
- “Implemented new software to track and resolve customer complaints, resulting in a 45% decrease in product returns.”

Use questions to dig deeper

If the result of your actions is not immediately clear to you, try asking yourself the following questions to illuminate the result of your actions:

- ▶ What would have happened if I didn't take that action? What would have fallen apart or what could not have happened next?
- ▶ Who benefits (clients, internal departments, executives, staff) from me taking that action?
- ▶ What did I ensure could happen NEXT, by taking the action I took?

The key to writing a strong resume bullet is to put the result at the front of the sentence.

Explain the result and follow it in the second half of the sentence by what action you took to create that outcome.

While this format is ideal, there are some bullets where it will make the most sense to have the action first, followed by the result.

Some more examples to inspire you

- ▶ Expanded client base and increased sales (result) by developing a new product based on unmet client needs (action).
- ▶ Decreased costs by 30% (result) by negotiating with suppliers to maximize savings (action).
- ▶ Earned top performance rating (result) by exceeding performance objectives while providing training, data quality and consulting services to the pharmaceutical industry (action).
- ▶ During a time of short staffing (background), trained new staff member and delegated tasks while supervising the quality of final deliverables (action), allowing project to be handed over to new employee while maintaining client confidence (result).
- ▶ Successfully avoided \$500K loss (result) by identifying an error in the expense processing system before invoice was sent to client (action).
- ▶ Ensured the firm was compliant with new regulations (result) by completing 100% of account remediation by the hard deadline (action).
- ▶ Increased brand awareness in the community (result) by spearheading an online social media campaign across multiple platforms (action).

How does it look?

- ▶ Is there enough white space?
- ▶ Is it inviting to read?
- ▶ Do the important elements jump off the page?

What does it say?

- ▶ Is the most relevant information highlighted?
- ▶ Is it your ‘best-of-the-best’?

How does it say it?

- ▶ Are there results and metrics?
- ▶ Did you use the most impactful language possible?

Your Name	
Boston, MA 617.555.1212 YourEmail@bu.edu LinkedIn.com/in/YourCustomURL	
EDUCATION	
MBA, Health Sector Management Program	Expected May 2019
Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dean’s Achievement Scholarship, GMAT 710	
BA, History with honors	May 2010
Undergraduate College, City; ST	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vice-chair, Student Debate Team; Junior and Senior years• Semester abroad in Madrid with Associated Colleges, 2007	
WORK EXPERIENCE	
Most Recent Company; Boston, MA	2013 to 2017
Research Manager Delivered diverse research projects in core policy areas, bringing sound project management and analytical expertise from initial design through to reporting.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defined the research function and won management’s approval for tripling the size of the research team, ultimately acting as direct supervisor to six research specialists.• Designed firm-wide protocol for efficient and thorough public records research; in its first year, specialists successfully conducted public records research on 2000+ candidates for over 200 searches.• Created a digital library of research materials and collaborated with a cross-functional team to investigate and implement file-sharing platforms; over 1,500 files and websites shared in two years.• Collaborated across teams to create new industry and function codes for the firm’s 330,000-person database; expanded database querying and reporting capabilities by developing new data extraction.• Award: Circle of Excellence (Top 10% in Nation) winner for overall team performance.	
Next To Last Company; Kalamazoo, MI	2010 to 2013
Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator (2 years) Provided oversight and support of partnerships with existing community groups, while developing and cultivating new regional partnerships.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivered presentations on the program to stakeholders and established partnerships with community groups that increased awareness; outreach resulted in 24 new partner schools.• Improved institutional memory by developing new record-keeping systems.• Proposed, designed, and implemented a new model for outreach to underserved areas which led to successfully recruiting five new partner schools.	
Transportation Sustainability Group Intern (1½ years) Led project to research, design, and implement a comprehensive community bike sharing program.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produced new marketing materials that motivated partner schools to diversify their activities.	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
Technical skills: Java, Python, SQL, Access, Crystal Reports, Excel, ArcGIS, Nexis Boolean search	
Language: Professional proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing Spanish	
Interests: Marathons (NYC, SF, Boston); Asian fusion cuisine, jai alai, Habitat for Humanity volunteer	

PLEASE NOTE

Less than 10 years of professional experience: 1 page (max)

10 years or more: up to 2 pages

NAME

- ▶ First and last; middle initial OK.

ADDRESS

- ▶ Boston, MA during school.

PHONE

- ▶ Domestic (USA) cellphone number.

E-MAIL

- ▶ BU e-mail while in MBA program.

LINKEDIN URL

- ▶ Customized URL (not default URL); instructions available [here](#).

Your Name

Boston, MA | 617.555.1212 | YourEmail@bu.edu | LinkedIn.com/in/YourCustomURL

Degrees listed in reverse chronological order.

MBA and planned concentration or program, with “Expected 2019” listed first.

Consider including (where applicable for BU and undergrad):

- ▶ GMAT (optional)
- ▶ academic scholarships
- ▶ team projects, honors, awards, and leadership roles
- ▶ club memberships
- ▶ volunteer work on campus

EDUCATION

MBA, Health Sector Management Program

Expected May 2019

Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA

- Dean’s Achievement Scholarship, GMAT 710

BA, History with honors

May 2010

Undergraduate College, City; ST

- Vice-chair, Student Debate Team; Junior and Senior years
- Semester abroad in Madrid with Associated Colleges, 2007

WORK EXPERIENCE

Relevant professional experience, including internships, in reverse chronological order.

Company name and location, with total years there (no need to include months).

Bolded title/position (if you had more than one title at the same company, please add the duration of each role, e.g. 2 years), followed by a two-line scope of the position.

Scope of the position: summarizes the position's general responsibility on a high level. Did people report to you? Did you handle multiple regions or departments?

BAR statements (2 lines, max), quantitative results when possible, must end with a period.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Most Recent Company; Boston, MA

2013 to 2017

Research Manager | Delivered diverse research projects in core policy areas, bringing sound project management and analytical expertise from initial design through to reporting.

- Defined the research function and won management's approval for tripling the size of the research team, ultimately acting as direct supervisor to six research specialists.
- Designed firm-wide protocol for efficient and thorough public records research; in its first year, specialists successfully conducted public records research on 2000+ candidates for over 200 searches.
- Created a digital library of research materials and collaborated with a cross-functional team to investigate and implement file-sharing platforms; over 1,500 files and websites shared in two years.
- Collaborated across teams to create new industry and function codes for the firm's 330,000-person database; expanded database querying and reporting capabilities by developing new data extraction.
- Award: Circle of Excellence (Top 10% in Nation) winner for overall team performance.

Next To Last Company; Kalamazoo, MI

2010 to 2013

Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator (2 years) | Provided oversight and support of partnerships with existing community groups, while developing and cultivating new regional partnerships.

- Delivered presentations on the program to stakeholders and established partnerships with community groups that increased awareness; outreach resulted in 24 new partner schools.

Provides information about your skills and abilities not necessarily obvious or presented in the preceding entries.

Provides additional insight to your character.

Consider including some combination of:

- ▶ Technical skills
- ▶ Certifications, memberships and affiliations
- ▶ Language proficiencies
- ▶ Volunteer work
- ▶ Interesting interests
- ▶ Non-career related awards of interest

Transportation Sustainability Group Intern (1 1/2 years) | Led project to research, design, and implement a comprehensive community bike sharing program.

- Produced new marketing materials that motivated partner schools to diversify their activities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Technical skills: Java, Python, SQL, Access, Crystal Reports, Excel, ArcGIS, Nexis Boolean search

Language: Professional proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing Spanish

Interests: Marathons (NYC, SF, Boston); Asian fusion cuisine, jai alai, Habitat for Humanity volunteer

WORD CLOUDS

Word Clouds can help you see the “real message” your résumé is delivering. Test and compare your résumé, cover letters, and LinkedIn Profile against job postings.



Go to www.wordle.net/create

Copy and paste your résumé into the box

Set the options to:

- ▶ **Language:** “Make all words lower case” and “Remove common English words”.
- ▶ **Font:** Telephoto (or something equally easy to read).
- ▶ **Layout:** Maximum words (25) / Prefer Alphabetical Order / Straighter Edges / Horizontal.
- ▶ **Color:** BW, Moss, or Kindled (keep color variations to a minimum).
- ▶ Selectively remove large but irrelevant words (right-click) like ‘Boston’, repeated company names, etc.

The large words are the most often repeated and, thus, considered more important.

WORD CLOUDS

Below is the **company's job posting** of interest to this applicant. The size of the words is directly proportional to the number of times the words are repeated in the posting.



Here is the applicant's **résumé** with the same word sizing. Is it a good fit? Is there a sufficient match between this résumé's "big words" and the above job posting's "big words"?



Your Name

Boston, MA | 617.555.1212 | YourEmail@bu.edu | LinkedIn.com/in/YourCustomURL

EDUCATION

MBA, Health Sector Management Program Expected May 2019

Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA

- Dean's Achievement Scholarship, GMAT 710

BA, History with honors May 2010

Undergraduate College, City; ST

- Vice-chair, Student Debate Team; Junior and Senior years
- Semester abroad in Madrid with Associated Colleges, 2007

WORK EXPERIENCE

Most Recent Company; Boston, MA 2013 to 2017

Research Manager | Delivered diverse research projects in core policy areas, bringing sound project management and analytical expertise from initial design through to reporting.

- Defined the research function and won management's approval for tripling the size of the research team, ultimately acting as direct supervisor to six research specialists.
- Designed firm-wide protocol for efficient and thorough public records research; in its first year, specialists successfully conducted public records research on 2000+ candidates for over 200 searches.
- Created a digital library of research materials and collaborated with a cross-functional team to investigate and implement file-sharing platforms; over 1,500 files and websites shared in two years.
- Collaborated across teams to create new industry and function codes for the firm's 330,000-person database; expanded database querying and reporting capabilities by developing new data extraction.
- Award: Circle of Excellence (Top 10% in Nation) winner for overall team performance.

Next To Last Company; Kalamazoo, MI 2010 to 2013

Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator (2 years) | Provided oversight and support of partnerships with existing community groups, while developing and cultivating new regional partnerships.

- Delivered presentations on the program to stakeholders and established partnerships with community groups that increased awareness; outreach resulted in 24 new partner schools.
- Improved institutional memory by developing new record-keeping systems.
- Proposed, designed, and implemented a new model for outreach to underserved areas which led to successfully recruiting five new partner schools.

Transportation Sustainability Group Intern (1½ years) | Led project to research, design, and implement a comprehensive community bike sharing program.

- Produced new marketing materials that motivated partner schools to diversify their activities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Technical skills: Java, Python, SQL, Access, Crystal Reports, Excel, ArcGIS, Nexis Boolean search

Language: Professional proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing Spanish

Interests: Marathons (NYC, SF, Boston); Asian fusion cuisine, jai alai, Habitat for Humanity volunteer

