



Boston University Questrom School of Business

Undergraduate Guide to Creating Professional Resumes

Undergraduate Academic and Career Development Center
questromudc@bu.edu
(617) 353-2650
<http://questromworld.bu.edu/udc>

Table of Contents

Getting Started

Purpose of this Guide	3
Purpose of a Professional Resume	3
Before you Begin Writing	3

The BU Questrom School of Business- Resume Format and Technical Specifications

General Formatting	4
Capitalization	4
Abbreviations	4
Dates	4
Numbers	4
Fonts	4
Margins	4
Resume Sections	5
Resume Paper	5

The BU Questrom School of Business-Content Guidelines

Contact Information	6
Education	7
Academic Team Projects	8
Experience	8
Develop and Write B-A-R Statements-Background, Action, Result	9-10
Skills	10
Leadership	11
Volunteer	11

Resume Sample	12
Resume Action Verbs	13
FAQ's	14

GETTING STARTED

Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help you develop the best possible resume to market yourself with confidence. Preparing your resume according to this guide and ensure it is in QST format. This guide will teach you:

- ❑ What to do before you begin writing your resume
- ❑ How to develop an effective, differentiating resume in the Questrom resume format
- ❑ How to address common resume concerns

Purpose of a Professional Resume

Your resume is an introduction to a potential employer and an important part of your brand. More often than not, employers will initially scan your resume and make an assessment very rapidly, often in 6 to 10 seconds. Your resume should showcase your skills and experiences in order to capture the employer's interest. The goal of your resume is to secure you an interview. Keep in mind that the resume you may have used for your college applications will most likely be VERY different than a professional resume.

A professional resume IS...

- ...a **one-page** marketing tool that distinguishes you from the competition by highlighting your skills, experiences, and accomplishments
- ...a presentation targeting the potential employer's needs and emphasizing your contributions and impact to previous organizations.

Before you begin writing, perform a comprehensive self-inventory by:

- Making a list of experiences, activities, and volunteer work
- Noting for each activity, job, volunteer work, or school project, the skills and accomplishments you want to highlight
- Writing as many details as possible about *all* of your experiences (do not worry about length at this time)

Stop by the Undergraduate Academic and Career Development Center (UDC)

While the information in these pages will get you started in creating your resume, the Career Advisors and Career Skills Coaches (CSCs) are available to critique your resume, answer questions, or provide additional information. Developing a quality resume can take time and effort, but it will be well worth it in creating opportunities along your career path.

****First Resume****- If you're taking your first pass at a Questrom resume, come for a Walk In Career Appointment with one of our CSCs. They are M-F 10am-4pm in the UDC.

****Advanced Resumes****- Make an appointment with a career advisor using Handshake.

The Boston University Questrom School of Business Resume Format: Grammar Rules and Technical Guidelines

Rules for Capitalization, Abbreviations, Dates, Numbers, and Technical Guidelines

Capitalization

- ❑ Capitalize the names of foreign countries, nationalities and specific languages.
- ❑ Do NOT capitalize industries or disciplines such as marketing, finance, strategy, biotechnology or high technology.
 - Example: Performed market research on high technology and biotechnology firms.

Abbreviations

- ❑ Abbreviate states for employer locations.
 - Use postal abbreviations (e.g. MA for Massachusetts).
 - Do not abbreviate states in the body of a job description (e.g. responsible for sales in Massachusetts).
- ❑ Spell out the full name for your degrees.
 - Bachelor of Science; not: BS
- ❑ For percentages use the percentage sign.
 - Increased sales by 25% over a six-month period.
- ❑ Avoid using the abbreviations co. or corp. spell them out: Company and Corporation.
- ❑ Spell out address information.
 - 15 Tenth Street; not: 15 Tenth St.

Dates

- ❑ Write out years completely: 2015-2019; not: 2015-19.
- ❑ Spell out months: February; not: Feb.

Writing Numbers

- ❑ Numbers less than ten should be spelled.
 - Two; not: 2
- ❑ Spell numbers when *beginning* sentences.
 - Fourteen students were trained; not: 14 students were trained.
- ❑ Use figures for large monetary amounts.
 - \$250,000 in sales
 - \$14.5 million (spell million and use lower case "m")
- ❑ When referring to monetary amounts from overseas, translate the amount into US dollars and write it as follows: US\$14.5 million

Fonts

- ❑ It is recommended to use a traditional, easy-to-read font, such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri.
- ❑ Use the same font type and font size throughout your resume, preferably 11 or 12 point, but never smaller than 10.
- ❑ If space allows, you may wish to draw greater attention to your name and increase the font size. Only increase the font size for your name, not any other contact information.

Margins

- ❑ All margins should be no less than 0.5 inches. Smaller margins may result in your resume being cut off when printed by a prospective employer. At a maximum, margins should be no wider than one inch.

Resume Sections

- **DO NOT** include sections such as Objective Statement, Summary of Qualifications, or References Available upon Request.
 - Objectives are antiquated and can be addressed in a cover letter.
 - Summary of qualifications are used only when you have 7+ years of work experience.
 - References will be a separate document that is not part of your resume.
- Resume section headings should be distinguished and easy to read by use of bold, italics, capital letters and/or underlining.
- Always include the following sections, at a minimum, in your resume: **Contact Information, Education, Experience, Skills**
- You may also choose to add sections such as: **Volunteer Experience, Leadership, Academic Projects, or Activities.**

Resume Paper

- Use professional business resume paper when handing a copy of your resume in person. This paper can be bought at any local office supply store. Acceptable paper colors include white, ivory or light grey.

The Boston University Questrom School of Business

Resume Format: Content Guidelines

Contact Information

- ❑ **Name:** Put your legal name. International students, or individuals who prefer to go by a nickname, may put their preferred name in quotes or parentheses, as indicated below.
- ❑ **Address:** It is acceptable to incorporate your school and permanent addresses, particularly if you plan to return to your home area post-graduation (for full-time work) or during the summer (for internships). You may choose to put only one address on your resume. Often you will want to choose the address that is closest to the internship/job you are applying to.
- ❑ **Telephone number**
 - Review your outgoing message on the telephone number you provide on your resume to ensure that it is professional.
 - Limit the number of phone numbers included – preferably you should list just one number; two is acceptable given certain circumstances. Choose the number that is most likely to reach you.
- ❑ **E-mail address:** As with telephone numbers, limit to one email address and be sure it is appropriate
- ❑ **LinkedIn profile URL:** Demonstrate your professionalism by displaying your LinkedIn URL on your resume. When doing this, be sure it is customized to be something different than the one that LinkedIn automatically provides you. Please search the “Help” menu on LinkedIn for specific instructions.

CHENG-GONG (John) MEI

cmei@bu.edu

617-123-4567

<http://www.linkedin.com/in/cgjohnmei>

Current Address

1234 Commonwealth Avenue Apt.12
Boston, MA 02246

Permanent Address

123 North Road
Brookline, MA 02445

Education

*List your GPA only if it is a 3.0 or above; always ensure it is up to date. Do not round.

Basic

BOSTON UNIVERSITY QUESTROM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS; Boston, MA May 20XX
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Concentration: XXX;
Cumulative GPA 3.XX

Joint Degrees

If you are receiving another degree from Boston University but outside the Questrom School of Business, your degrees may be listed in the following way:

BOSTON UNIVERSITY; Boston, MA January 20XX
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration; Concentration: XXX
Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering
Cumulative GPA: 3.XX

Multiple Concentrations

BOSTON UNIVERSITY QUESTROM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS; Boston, MA September 20XX
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Dual Concentrations: Finance and Marketing;
Cumulative GPA: 3.XX

Minor

BOSTON UNIVERSITY QUESTROM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS; Boston, MA September 20XX
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Concentration: Finance
Minor in Economics
Cumulative GPA: 3.XX

Multiple Undergraduate Institutions

If you transferred schools as an undergraduate.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY QUESTROM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS; Boston, MA May 20XX
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Concentration: XXX;
Cumulative GPA: 3.XX

UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND; Kingston, RI September 20XX – May 20XX
Coursework toward Bachelor of Science in Accounting
Cumulative GPA: 3.XX

Study Abroad

BOSTON UNIVERSITY QUESTROM SCHOOL OF BUSINESS; Boston, MA May 20XX
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
Concentration: XXX
Cumulative GPA: 3.XX

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN; Dublin, Ireland Spring 20XX
Study Abroad Program

Academic Team Projects (RECOMMENDED)

Basic

- ❑ Include those that are most closely connected to the industry you are pursuing.
- ❑ It is better to profile one or two strong team projects and offer more detailed descriptions than to provide a brief overview of all of your projects.
- ❑ Be sure to incorporate the team aspect; however, also highlight any specific area of the assignment where you took ownership.
- ❑ Develop “Impact Statements” or “B-A-R statements” that highlight your role and contributions to the team.

Sample

ACADEMIC TEAM PROJECT <i>Title of Project</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insert “B-A-R Statement-Background, Action, Result”	Semester Taken
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Experience

The Experience section highlights your skills, accomplishments, and impact on a company and/or extracurricular activity. Experiences should be listed in reverse chronological order and should include:

- ❑ **Company Name**
- ❑ **Job title**
- ❑ **Location (s)** of where you worked
- ❑ **Dates of employment** (months and years); all dates should end at the right margin.
- ❑ **“B-A-R Statements-Background, Action, Result”** Always order your statements by starting with the important and industry relevant information first.

SAMPLES

LEWIS CONSULTING ASSOCIATES ; Boston, MA <i>Marketing Intern</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generated market research reports for technology companies through focus groups to provide qualitative feedback.	May 20XX – August 20XX
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- ❑ **Company Name Change** if a company you have worked for has changed names, you may indicate the previous name on your resume.

DIVINE (Previously: OPEN MARKET) ; Chicago, IL <i>Human Resources Intern</i>	June 20XX – Present
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------

- ❑ **Entrepreneurial Experience/Self Employment** If you founded or started a company, detail the major activities and skills required to launch the business.

ABC SOFTWARE, INCORPORATED ; Cambridge, MA <i>Co-Founder and President</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed business and financial plan to raise capital, securing \$1,000 in funding in less than one year• Collaborated with research and development to produce a demonstration website for potential clients• Secured two new clients valued at \$800 within the first six months through personal networking	June 20XX – Present
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B-A-R Method

Resume Bullet Writing

Company Name: _____
 Position: _____

B= Background	A = Action	R = Result	Completed
<i>What did you do?</i>	<i>How did you do it</i>	<i>Why did you do it (or what was the purpose/result)?</i>	<i>Completed B-A-R statement</i>
Created a database	Used Access to develop the database, implemented user input form, ran reports	The company wanted to provide targeted sales approaches for each client based upon 3-4 dimensions	Created Access database for over 200 clients to achieve a more customized sales approach

Writing Powerful B-A-R Statements, Background, Action, and Result”

- Think about ways that you made an impact or achieved an accomplishment.

Before	After
Before I organized the inventory, orders took three hours to process.	After I organized the inventory, orders were processed in half the time.

- Always start your “B-A-R Statements-Background, Action, Result” with an action verb (please see page 13 for a list). Avoid words or phrases such as aided, assisted, helped, learned, gained, participated, worked and responsibilities included. These words tend to be passive and do not actively reflect your role, skills, and accomplishments.

Resulting B-A-R Statement:

- Organized inventory through creation of an Excel spreadsheet and reduced order processing time by half.
- OR**, for even more of an impact, start with the accomplishment:
- Reduced order processing by 50% by organizing inventory on an Excel spreadsheet.

- Incorporate numbers, data, facts, percentages and figures that create an impact.

Before	After
A long report	250-page status report
Managed staff	Managed four-person staff
Saved money	Saved department \$75,000 annually
Short time	In less than three hours

1. Make sure your statements are clear and verifiable. Can you explain the results in detail to an interviewer?
2. Determine the company’s needs, or utilize the job description, and craft “B-A-R Statements – Background, Action, Result” to meet those needs and that illustrate competencies the company is looking for.
 - Incorporate the skills, key words, and capabilities that the employer or industry values for the position;
 - Be aware that resume readers and recruiters will likely read the first one or two bullets under each job. Therefore, order the bullets to reflect the skills that the employer finds most pertinent, and not necessarily those most important in the old job or those that consumed the greatest amount of time.

Skills

Incorporate computer, social media and language skills into this section. Be aware that if you indicate aptitude or proficiency in a technical skill or language, you should be prepared to discuss or speak it during an interview. **DO NOT** list soft skills in this section.

- Fluent means that you have the ability to speak, write and read the language with ease
- Native speaker means that you are fluent in the language and have been immersed in the culture
- Conversational means that you can speak the language with relative ease

SKILLS

Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Word; basic Adobe Photoshop, Visio; knowledge of Twitter, Pinterest and Tumblr

Language: Fluent in German and French; reading ability in Italian and Portuguese

Leadership Experience (OPTIONAL)

This section addresses leadership roles in clubs, organizations and athletics. Often these experiences demonstrate transferrable skills that employers desire. This can include (but is not limited to): fraternities/sororities, BU or QST clubs, student government, orientation leaders, etc.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Boston University First Year Student Outreach Project; Boston, MA August 20XX and August 20XX
Staff Leader

- Led a group of 20 incoming freshmen through volunteer activities with non-profit organizations weekly
- Facilitated group discussions each day through games, reflection circles, and written activities

Volunteer Experience (OPTIONAL)

This is also a section that can highlight transferrable skills and how you have given back to the community. List the most current and related volunteer experience.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Habitat for Humanity; Boston, MA Summers 20XX – 20XX
Volunteer

- Built homes with a team of 15 students and community members in an area affected by hurricanes
- Raised \$1,000 by establishing partnerships with local businesses to subsidize transportation for the trip

SAMPLE RESUME: DO NOT COPY

Plagiarism is a violation of the Academic Conduct Code

Rhett Terrier

595 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02215

617-555-5555 • questromudc@bu.edu • LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/RhettTerrier

EDUCATION

Boston University Questrom School of Business, Boston, MA

May 2018

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

Dual Concentrations: Marketing and Operations & Technology Management

Cumulative GPA: 3.3

Activities: Vice President of Student Affairs; Honors Program; LOCK Honor Society; BU Marketing Club

Academic Team Projects

Fall 2016

Cross Functional CORE Project

- Collaborated with a team of nine to develop a unique service idea and devise an integrated business plan
- Led the marketing subsection team to analyze market trends, user target factors, assess market competitors, calculate proper price points, and create various advertising strategies for social media and print campaigns
- Contributed to operations, finance, and quantitative analysis sub-teams to reconcile functional areas
- Developed a business plan over 100 pages long that explained in detail the hypothetical business's positioning and marketing, operations and supply chain management, financial statements, and risk calculations

WORK EXPERIENCE

Boston University Questrom Undergraduate Development Center, Boston, MA

January 2015 – Present

Front Desk Associate

- Provide students with information regarding academics and student life and comprehensively answer questions
- Schedule meetings between students and advisors; email daily reminders to create a coordinated agenda
- Assist with the organization of Open Houses by creating information folders, guiding prospective students, and offering auxiliary support to advisors

Wanderu, Boston, MA

June 2017 – September 2017

Marketing Content & SEO Intern

- Perform keyword research using Moz SEO software and Google Trends to gauge user intent, click rates, and time spent on various pages
- Optimize webpages for carriers like Amtrak and Peter Pan to include popular keywords utilized in searches with the goal of increased organic user traffic to the site

F'real Foods, Boston, MA

October 2016 – October 2017

Campus Brand Ambassador

- Develop and maintain relationships with key university members, including; Foodservice and/or Retail employees, campus marketing teams, and student social influencers, to increase awareness of F'real
- Create new and unique marketing tactics and social media initiatives to interact with students and create positive buzz about the brand and increase recognition of brand
- Attend monthly online team meetings to discuss challenges, opportunities, and strategies for marketing

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Delta Sigma Pi – Gamma Chapter, Boston University

December 2016 – Present

VP of Fundraising

- Coordinate several fundraising events throughout the year and have personally raised over \$1200 each year
- Manage all chapter budgeting, financials, and arrange all payment plan structuring for members

Boston University Questrom Dean's Host, Boston University

December 2015 – Present

- Selected to represent the Questrom School of Business by giving weekly tours and assisting in open house events for prospective families and students

SKILLS

Computer: Microsoft Office Word, PowerPoint, and Excel

Language: Conversational Spanish

RESUME ACTION VERBS

Achievement

accelerated
accomplished
achieved
activated
attained
competed
earned
effected
elicited
executed
exercised
expanded
expedited
generated
improved
increased
insured
marketed
mastered
obtained
produced
reduced
reorganized
reproduced
restructured
simplified
sold
solicited
streamlined
succeeded
upgraded

Help/Teach

advised
clarified
coached
collaborated
consulted
counseled
educated
explained
facilitated
guided
instructed
modeled
taught
trained
tutored

Administrative

arranged
channeled
charted
collated
collected
coordinated
dispensed
distributed
established
executed
implemented
installed
maintained
offered
ordered
outlined
performed
prepared
processed
provided
purchased
recorded
rendered
served
serviced
sourced
supported

Lead/Manage

acquired
administered
approved
assigned
chaired
contracted
controlled
decided
delegated
directed
enlisted
governed
handled
initiated
instilled
managed
motivated
recruited
retained
reviewed
selected

Communication

addressed
arbitrated
articulated
briefed
communicated
conducted
contacted
conveyed
corresponded
delivered
demonstrated
edited
entertained
interviewed
informed
lectured
mediated
negotiated
persuaded
presented
promoted
proposed
publicized
reported
represented
responded
suggested
translated
wrote

Plan/Organize

allocated
anticipated
arranged
catalogued
categorized
classified
collected
consolidated
convened
edited
eliminated
employed
grouped
monitored
planned
regulated
scheduled
structured

Creative

authored
changed
conceived
constructed
created
developed
devised
drafted
established
formulated
founded
illustrated
influenced
introduced
invented
launched
originated
revamped
revised
staged
updated
visualized

Research/ Analytical

assessed
compared
critiqued
defined
derived
detected
determined
discovered
evaluated
examined
explored
found
inspected
interpreted
investigated
located
measured
observed
rated
recommended
reviewed
searched
studied
surveyed

Financial

allocated
analyzed
appraised
audited
balanced
budgeted
calculated
compiled
computed
controlled
disbursed
estimated
figured
financed
forecasted
projected
reconciled
tabulated

Technical

adapted
adjusted
applied
built
computed
constructed
designed
diagnosed
engineered
experimented
maintained
modified
operated
prescribed
programmed
proved
reinforced
repaired
resolved
restored
solved
specified
systematized
tested

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

The following is an attempt to address the common questions that students ask about what should be included on their resumes. The answers to these questions are somewhat generalized, so if you have a specific issue or question, it is recommended that you schedule an appointment with an UDC career advisor or come by during walk-in hours to discuss your individual concerns.

When should I include my cumulative GPA on my resume?

- The UDC recommends you include your **cumulative GPA** if it is 3.0 or higher. Your cumulative GPA is the average of your grades in *all* courses taken at Boston University toward your undergraduate degree. GPA should always be carried to two decimal points and should never be rounded up (i.e., 3.47 is not the same as 3.5). Employers can and often will request a copy of your transcript(s) to verify this information.
- You may choose to put your major GPA on your resume. Your major GPA should include all of the courses you have taken in QST. For more information on how to calculate your major GPA, please see the UDC website GPA information under “resumes and cover letters” [here](#).

If I don't include my GPA on my resume, will employers still consider me?

- Some employers place a great deal of emphasis on academic achievement. Because your grade point average is the only quantifiable way to measure this, employers may use the GPA as one criterion for selecting students for interviews.
- However, not all employers place a high value on the GPA. They may place more emphasis on work experience, leadership, and/or evidence of certain skills (technical or soft). You should be prepared in case you are asked about your GPA during an interview. If asked, be honest in stating your GPA, and if you have extenuating circumstances, such as working 30 hours a week while in school or struggled in a single semester or with a single class, then briefly offer an explanation.

If I transferred into the Questrom School of Business, should I include my GPA from my previous college?

- You may include your GPA from another institution, if it is 3.0 and above. However, once you have a GPA from Questrom, that GPA should take precedent and be the primary one listed.

Should I include my high school education on my resume?

- In general, it is recommended that you eliminate your high school education from your resume. Freshmen may leave it on for the first year, but it should be removed by sophomore year. However, you may include your high school longer if you are pursuing work in the area where the school is located or if you want to leverage your high school's alumni network or reputation.

Should I have two separate resumes if I have a dual concentration?

- If the two concentrations are distinctly different fields and your job search is in two separate areas with little cross over, it may be in your best interest to craft two resumes with each resume emphasizing the experience and team projects that you have in each of the two concentrations.
- If you plan to focus your job-search efforts in one of the two fields, then you should list the primary concentration first and highlight the experiences in that field throughout your resume.

Do employers care if I have a job during the school year that is unrelated to the career I am pursuing?

- Employers are interested in information that sets you apart from the competition. If you are able to maintain a strong GPA and participate in a number of activities as well as work 20 hours a week, you send a strong message to a prospective employer that you are able to manage your time effectively, can multi-task, and most likely have good time management skills. While these may not be specific technical skills required for the job, they are transferable soft skills that you will take into any workplace at any time.

Can I list unpaid jobs or volunteer experience on my resume, or do employers only want to see paid experiences?

- You should incorporate all recent experience into your resume whether it is paid or not. Especially if it is an experience that enhances your skillsets or knowledge in a field you are hoping to enter. Whether or not you were paid is most often not the primary interest of a perspective employer. In fact, some of the best learning experiences come from unpaid experience.