School of Business Undergraduate Programs

## Resume & Cover Letter Toolkit

**Resume Tips Online resume tutorial:** [www.pdx.edu/sba/success-shorts-for-students-6](http://www.pdx.edu/sba/success-shorts-for-students-6)

**Content** - Review the attached samples to see these suggestions applied to a resume.

* **Know your audience**. Specifically address the skills & abilities required for the job you are seeking.
* **Pack your resume with accomplishments**.   
  Don’t list your job duties. Rather, outline the action you took,   
  goals you achieved, and the impact you had.
* **Include quantifiable results**, e.g. “Increased quarterly sales by 25%.”
* **Contact information at the top**: Be sure to include your name, address, phone number, and e-mail.
* **Choose your email address carefully**:   
  Your job search e-mail address should be your name or a variation not a cute or funny address.   
  Not “bigpoppa@yahoo.com” or [sweetkisses@hotmail.com](mailto:sweetkisses@hotmail.com)
* **GPA**: If your GPA is above a 3.0, include it. Note: Accounting firms expect to see your GPA.

### Formatting Checklist - Use this list to produce a clean and effective resume.

☐ **Format**: Most business resumes use the **Chronological format**. Your most recent information, usually education for current students, goes at the top, just below the Summary or Profile.

☐ **What comes first gets read first**: The top third of the page should contain information most closely related to the position you are targeting.

☐ **Profile, or Summary Section**: Omit the “Objective” section. Instead, use a summary of qualifications with facts directly related to the position you are targeting. Example: Five years’ sales experience.

☐ **Brief is best**. In most business fields: one page for applicants entering a first career.

☐ **Use Action Verbs**: Begin each new item with an action verb – see attached list.

☐ **Use Consistent Formatting**: Your formatted heading and font should be the same on all written materials, including your resume, cover letter, and list of references.

☐ **Font**: Select a conservative font style such as CG Omega, Tahoma, Palatino, or Arial. Font size should be readable, more than 10 point.

☐ **Bullet points**: Use solid bullet points to set   
off your accomplishments – avoid paragraphs.

☐ **Abbreviations**: Avoid abbreviations unless they are common to your industry and easily understood by the reader.

☐ **Numbers**: Spell out numbers “ten” and lower (excluding dates and GPA).

**Once you have a draft** - You and at least one other person must proofread it.

* **Make sure it is error free and grammatically correct**. Have your resume reviewed by someone else or set it down for several hours and come back to it with fresh eyes.Remember spell check does not identify grammar errors and misspelled proper names (company names, employer contact names). Errors in your resume could cost you an interview opportunity.
* **You are now ready to have your School of Business advisor review your work**. Visit KMC 220 or call 503-725-3712 to schedule an appointment. For a quick review, come to Express Advising and meet with a peer advisor.

**Chronological Resume Template**

# Your Name

*NOTE: Your heading is your brand; use one format for all headers including resumes, cover letters, and references.*

Street Address

City, State and Zip

phone number and email address

## SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

These should be specific and objective things about yourself such as:

* Three years’ management experience.
* Top sales award recipient May 201X
* Fluent in Spanish *(NOTE: Only list languages if relevant to the position)*
* Proficient in business and financial software, including Excel

**EDUCATION**

### Name of School City, State Month and Year Earned

**Degree Earned (include your major) *(or Month+Year Expected)***

List highest degree 1st - List the expected graduation month and year for degrees in progress

List your GPA if above 3.0

* Here you may also list offices held, honors, and accomplishments.
* Relevant projects: You may want to include details of relevant class projects or fieldwork. Internships   
  can go under experience section. Be sure to use course name rather than numbers
* It is best to only list schools from which you will earn a degree.
* If you have completed or are currently enrolled in a Bachelor’s degree program, you do not need to list Associates programs or your High School education.

**EXPERIENCE**

### Name of Company City, State Start - End Month/Year

**Position Title**

* List all your work experience starting with the most recent. Quantify results and accomplishments,   
  not just responsibilities held.
* Keep resume to one page if possible. Use 10-12 point font and approximately one inch margins.
* Use bullets to guide the reader to a new supporting statement about what you have done**.**
* Start each new statement with an action verb and avoid using “duties were” or “responsible for.”
* Employers will often scan for *keywords* in your resume that apply to the criteria in their job description. Research jobs that interest you and use the relevant key words to support your experience.

### SKILLS

Computer Skills: List software & skills, indicating level of proficiency, e.g., Proficient in MS Word, etc.

Languages: List Languages spoken and level of proficiency, e.g., Fluent in Vietnamese and English

*NOTE: If the only types of skills you will be discussing are computer skills or technical skills, let that be the name of the section.*

**Other possible sections: VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE (put after WORK EXPERIENCE)**

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, AWARDS, INTERESTS**

* List organizations or clubs you belong to that relate to your job objective.
* Include information that relates to the position or the interest of the company, i.e. running   
  if you are applying for a position with Nike, Adidas or Columbia Sportswear.

*NOTE: Do not list references on your resume. Instead, bring a separate reference sheet to your interview.*

**Sample Chronological Resume**

# Lauren Sydney 5432-1 SE 64th Ave. Portland, OR 97206 503-555-1212 Lauren.Sydney@pdx.edu

**SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

* Three years’ experience in commercial banking, analyzing small and medium-sized businesses   
  for lending purposes
* Proficient in MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Access. Experienced with pivot tables and macros
* Strong financial modeling skills. Experienced with developing pro forma financial statements and projection analysis using Excel to model future financial performance and cash flow needs
* Successful in team environments

**EDUCATION**

**Portland State University Portland, OR Expected June 201X**

***Bachelor of Science in Finance***

* GPA 3.2 overall, 3.5 in Business
* Recipient, GS Smith Scholarship for Future Finance Professionals
* Successfully solved complex capital budgeting problems in advanced finance class

**EXPERIENCE**

**Bank of America Tualatin, OR Oct. 2016 – Present**

***Teller Coordinator***

* Manage operations and responsibilities of the vault and three teller positions
* Solve complex customer related problems, resulting in repeat business
* Guide employees on policy and procedure matters
* Audit teller cash drawers and maintained records of teller cash balancing totaling more than $100,000

**Wells Fargo Portland, OR Summer 2016**

***Commercial Lending Intern***

* Analyzed portfolios of small and mid-sized business in Portland metro area
* Made loan recommendations to loan committee in amounts ranging from $1,000 - $50,000

**Bank of the West**

***Teller* May 2014-Jan. 2016**

* Provided exceptional customer service to fast-paced banking environment, averaging 20 transactions   
  and $9,000 per hour
* Generated referrals and sales from current customers

**VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

**VITA/ Cash Oregon Portland, OR 2015 & 2016**

***Volunteer Tax Preparer* Tax Seasons**

* Prepared federal and state income taxes for low income individuals

**SKILLS**Computer Skills: Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access   
 (Note: Mention these skills either at the top or here, but not in both places.)

Languages: Fluent in English and Spanish, conversational French

**Action Verbs for Resumes**

These can be used in listing your accomplishments and skills on your resume, for example, in the bullets under each job in your “Experience” section. Try to begin with an action verb (past tense except for your current position) and avoid –ing verbs and nouns at the start. For example, instead of leading with prepositional phrases like “Responsible for…” use “Managed…”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Planned** |  |  |  |  |
| Analyzed  Appraised  Created  Developed | Designed  Devised  Estimated  Evaluated | Examined  Identified  Interpreted  Measured | Organized  Originated  Planned  Prepared | Produced  Researched  Reviewed  Studied |
| **Directed** |  |  |  |  |
| Authorized  Awarded | Controlled  Coordinated | Designed  Directed | Maintained  Managed | Operated  Supervised |
| **Executed** |  |  |  |  |
| Achieved  Administered  Approved  Arranged  Assembled  Combined | Completed  Consolidated  Converted  Demonstrated  Developed  Distributed | Employed  Established  Executed  Expanded  Generated  Implemented | Improved  Increased  Performed  Presented  Procured  Produced | Reorganized  Sponsored  Strengthened  Supplemented  Updated  Utilized |
| **Serviced** |  |  |  |  |
| Assisted  Audited  Communicated  Corresponded | Delivered  Informed  Instructed  Ordered | Prepared  Processed  Purchased  Received | Represented  Serviced  Supplied  Sold | Taught  Tested  Trained  Translated |
| **Advised** |  |  |  |  |
| Advertised  Advised  Consulted | Demonstrated  Displayed  Edited | Exhibited  Illustrated  Informed | Proposed  Publicized  Recommended | Referred  Reported  Suggested |

### Personality Descriptors:

These words can be used in your resume or cover letter to describe your personal style in the work place, class projects or student organizations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Accurate  Analytical  Competent  Conscientious  Creative  Cross-cultural  Customer-driven  Decisive  Dedicated  Dependable  Determined  Diligent  Direct | Dynamic  Eager  Effective  Efficient  Energetic  Enterprising  Enthusiastic  Entrepreneurial  Ethical  Experienced  Expert  Global  Independent | Innovative  Insightful  Intelligent  Leader  Market-driven  Motivated  Multilingual  Objective  Observant  Organized  Persuasive  Polished  Positive | Practical  Proactive  Productive  Professional  Proficient  Progressive  Quality-driven  Reliable  Resilient  Resourceful  Skilled  Skillful  Strategic | Tactful  Talented  Team builder  Team leader  Team player  Technical  Thorough  Tolerant Top Producer  Trainer  Trouble-shooter  Trustworthy  Understanding |

**Cover Letter Template & Guidelines**

# Today’s Date

Your Address 🡨 **Instead of using a traditional letter format**, which requires

City, State and Zip you to include your address as shown here at the left, it’s very

E-mail address effective visually if you **use the same banner at the top of**

**your letter that you used on your resume.** This then

Mr./Ms. (Contact’s Name), Title becomes your personal “brand,” and then you don’t have to

Company Name include your address here. You only need the date.

Company Address and Street

City, State and Zip

**Dear Mr./Ms.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:** Use “Hiring Manager” if you don’t know the contact person’s name.

**OPENING PARAGRAPH:**You may use a clever opening sentence to make the reader want to continue reading.   
This shows you’ve done your homework regarding the company’s needs.

* Often a strong declarative sentence about the job function or business area is an attention-getter. Example: “Solid supply chain management reduces costs and leads to customer satisfaction.”
* State the reason for the letter, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying.
* Indicate how you learned of the opening (e.g., PSU Career Center, newspaper ad, on-campus information session, etc.) or who referred you to the company.

**BODY: Critical content section.**

There are two key ideas you want to get across here:

(1) Why you are interested in the company. (2) Why the company should be interested in you.

* State the skills/strengths you will bring to the job and that parallel those needed to fill the position.
* Give examples of your skills and work experience—quantified results, accomplishments, achievements—and how they will transfer to the job.
* If you are still in school or a recent grad, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position.
* Avoid repeating information already in your resume. Instead, expand on it and give examples.
* You may wish to break this section into several short paragraphs that separate and emphasize your skills and strengths. Some people choose to use bullets for easy reading of lists of accomplishments.

**CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Push for personal contact. Ask for an interview.**

* Refer to documents enclosed or available, such as your resume, reference letters, a portfolio or work samples.
* Let the interviewer know that you are available for a personal interview at his/her convenience.
* Make it easy for the person to contact you; list your **phone number**, e-mail, and days and times when you can be reached (especially important if you are still a student and are in classes during the day). If you aren’t home during day, invest in an answering machine.

Sincerely,

(Sign clearly above your typed name and hit ENTER three times if actually signing,

But only twice if you are simply typing your name.

Your Name, Typed

**Sample Cover Letter**

# Brian A. Ballard

555 Hall Lane Beaverton, OR 98765  
503-555-4444

Brian\_Ballard@isp.com

June 23, 201X

Ms. Anna Liszt

Financial Manager

Hi Finance Corp.

123 Easy Street

Middletown, OR 97777

Dear Ms. Liszt:

I am writing to apply for the Finance Internship posted on the Portland State University Handshake jobs board. I have been interested in a career in financial advising ever since I started at Portland State, and I learned about the Hi Finance Group last fall when Joe Burnside, from your Vancouver Office, spoke at a career panel at one of the meetings of PSU’s Chapter of the Financial Management Association.

As a senior in Finance at Portland State University, I have worked on several class projects related to portfolio analysis. I have strong computer application skills including Excel, Power Point and Access. From my coursework I have gained experience working in and I am very comfortable making group presentations.

For the last two years I have volunteered as a part-time client interviewer and bookkeeper for a low-income housing nonprofit organization. From this position I developed strong customer relations skills. I also learned to be accurate and effective with ledger entries, meeting monthly and quarterly deadlines for reporting to the nonprofit’s board.

I would like the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this position and my background in more detail. I can be reached by phone at 503-333-4444 and by email at Brian\_Ballard@isp.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Ballard

**How to Prepare a List of References**

### Create a reference sheet using the same heading as your resume. This list should contain supervisors or managers who can offer positive feedback about you. Make sure you ask before you put them on the list. Ideally you will list at least three names. References may be divided into categories if needed: Professional, Academic, and Personal. If you have at least three professional or academic references, you do not need to list personal ones.

* Be aware that some companies will only give out basic information such as the dates you were employed.
* Bring this sheet with you to your interview. Do not offer references until this time.   
  It is best to avoid handing them out until you have a good chance of getting a position.
* Contact your references as soon as you have handed out the reference sheet. To ensure that your references offer helpful and specific feedback, provide them with your most recent resume and a description of any position for which you submitted their names as references.
* If a reference provider is no longer in the position they held when you worked with them, list the previous title and company.

### Jill Jobseeker 1313 Mockingbird Lane 845-555-5432 Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 JillJobseeker@gmail.com

**PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES**

**Joe Shmo, Owner**

Shmo Tires Inc.

1212 Happy Road 503-555-1234

Portland OR 97221 [JoeS@ShmoTires.com](mailto:JoeS@ShmoTires.com)

**Olive Oil, Office Manager** (previously Teller Supervisor with Key Bank)

Finance Bank

3333 Smiley Lane 971-555-8888

Portland OR 97220 OliveO@FinanceCo.com

**ACADEMIC REFERENCES**

**Dr. Richard Quant, Assistant Professor of Finance**

Portland State University

P.O. Box 751 503-725-5555

Portland OR 97207-0751 RQuest@pdx.edu

**How to Write a Thank You Note**

**Show your professionalism:** Send a thank you note after a job interview or an informational interview. Thank you notes offer you another opportunity to express your interest and enthusiasm in the position.

* Thank you notes can be either handwritten on professional note card stationary or typed  
  on the same paper you used for your resume/cover letter.
* Send a thank you to all the individuals you met with during your interview.   
  Be sure to get their business cards for the correct spelling of their names and their titles.  
  If you didn’t manage to get a card, check to see if their profile is on LinkedIn.
* If the employer will be making a decision in a week or less, you may want to hand deliver your note. Another option is to send your thanks via email. Remember when emailing to write as you would a regular letter: Do use capitalization, good grammar and full sentences. Don’t use the sorts of abbreviations you would when texting a friend. You can also save your well formatted professional looking letter as a pdf, take a snapshot of the page and paste it right into the body of an email.

**A top-notch thank you letter must include the following components:**

* An opening statement in which you express your appreciation for the interview.
* A second paragraph that reinforces your understanding of the position’s requirements and emphasizes your qualifications. Be sure to include any important information you may have omitted at the interview.
* If necessary, a third paragraph to correct any misunderstanding the interviewer might have following your meeting. You can also use this paragraph to counter any objections the interviewer raised about an aspect of your background.
* A closing statement that expresses your interest in the position and the company and encourages continued contact.

### Jill Jobseeker 1313 Mockingbird Lane 845-555-5432 Poughkeepsie, NY 12603 JillJobseeker@gmail.com

June 23, 201X

Ms. Emma East

Media Buyer, East Advertising  
 10000 SW 3rd Ave.

Middletown, OR 97777

Dear Ms. East:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me yesterday to discuss the Media Assistant Internship.   
 I am very excited about the opportunity to be in an agency environment working directly media reps.

I was really impressed with East’s commitment to keeping the customer involved during all aspects of promotional development. I believe that my skills in customer relations will be an asset in this position.

As we discussed I am available to begin work immediately and am comfortable with flexible hours.   
 I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jill Jobseeker