



PreBusiness Committee Presents:

RESUME WORKSHOP

September 24, 2006

- I. Understanding your audience
 - a. Know who is reading your resume
 - i. If you're applying to an investment bank or consulting firm, your reader is probably reading a hundred resumes; you need to be concise and to the point
 - ii. If you're applying to a smaller firm, your reader is probably just reading 20-30; you can afford to be more detailed
 - b. Be interesting, not weird
 - i. With resumes, it is usually better to be conservative. Show that you are an interesting candidate through your activities and descriptions, not through "showy" language
 - ii. Example, you should say your hobby is "Skiing", not "Racing through fresh powder with the best skiers in the Rocky Mountains"
 - c. Tailoring your resume to your audience
 - i. Make sure you know what is important to your audience, and tailor your resume
 - ii. It is probably a good idea to have different resumes for different types of jobs
 - iii. Do not tailor your resume for each job, because then it is too difficult to keep track
- II. Formatting / attention to detail
 - a. Make your name big at the top (but not too big)
 - b. Make your resume detailed, but clean and not cluttered
 - c. Place emphasis on what is important
 - i. Your resume real estate is precious; do not include things that are not meaningful; spend more time on activities and experiences that are most important
 - d. Dates / places - make these clear and easy to follow
 - e. Spelling, punctuation - easiest way to have your resume rejected is spelling errors or punctuation errors
 - f. Bullets vs. sentences
 - i. Depends on your style; I prefer bullets because they are easier for the resume reader to follow
 - g. High school - you should probably list your high school and accomplishments, but make sure your college section is larger than your high school section
 - h. Activities, interests - this is very important; think about how you want to be portrayed (e.g. "video games" is probably not a good hobby to list unless you are applying for a video game software company); this section will be helpful in interviews when you are trying to connect with the interviewer
- III. Rules and guidelines
 - a. GPA
 - i. If you can round up to 1 decimal, round up. Otherwise, use 2 decimals
 1. If your GPA is 3.65, put 3.7 on your resume
 2. If your GPA is 3.44, put 3.44 on your resume (not 3.4)
 - ii. GPA guidelines
 1. 3.8+ is outstanding, 3.5-3.7 is good - most competitive processes (e.g. investment banks, consulting firms) have a GPA cut-off at 3.5
 2. 3.1-3.4 is "ok" - it is your judgment call on whether to put it on your resume
 3. 3.0 and below - better to leave your GPA off your resume (but still be prepared to discuss it in the interview)
 - b. SAT
 - i. 1550+ is excellent, definitely put on resume
 - ii. 1500-1550 is good, put on resume



- iii. Below 1490 and below – your judgment call again. If you are applying for a job that is quantitative or reading / writing focused, you may include your SAT if either your math or verbal scores are particularly high

IV. Describing your accomplishments

- a. The key is showing responsibility, activity and leadership
- b. Use active, not passive voice. Use active verbs, not passive verbs (avoid “participated in” and other passive verbs)
- c. The first verb in your description is most important
- d. Using concrete descriptions / numbers / examples
- e. Do not go overboard with the above techniques - not everything on your resume can or should be exciting

Real examples:

Bad: Organized schedules and explained study procedures to approximately 350 subjects.

Better: Conducted an experiment with 350 subjects; coordinated scheduling and explained study procedures.

Bad: As secretary, kept minutes, ran elections and chaired the constitutional review committee.

Better: Responsible for carrying out elections and keeping minutes. As Constitutional Review Committee Chairperson, organized and led quarterly meetings to review and revise the constitution.

Bad: “Conceptualized, developed, and researched original topics”

Comments: What the heck does this mean? Anything is better than this – at least name some of the topics.

Bad: Used Microsoft Excel, Access and the company’s proprietary statistical analysis tools to develop detailed status reports for management.

Better: Developed three new detailed status reports for management using Excel, Access and the company’s proprietary statistical analysis tools.

Bad: Assisted in the running of the business information office at Company X

Comments: Don’t begin with “assisted”, just say “Ran the business information office...”; explain what this role involves.

Bad: Arranged meeting schedules for clients using a special scheduler software

Comments: Unless you are applying to be a secretary, do not include mundane tasks.

Bad: Helped update client management database to facilitate the ease of extracting information on US companies.

Comments: Again, do not begin with “helped”. Including some numbers will make this example more concrete.

Better: Organized and updated a client management database of 300 companies to improve ease of use.

Bad: Summarized findings and proposed strategies in oral and PowerPoint presentation before the Director of Human Resources.

Better: Presented findings and strategies to the Director of Human Resources on preventing misuse of company expense accounts.