

CAREER TOOLKIT



MBA RESUME GUIDE

RESUME BASICS

Your resume **IS NOT:**

- your autobiography;
- just a list of tasks or job descriptions.

Your resume **IS:**

- an overview of key 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.

COMPLETING YOUR RESUME

- **RESUME TEMPLATE:** Like most top business schools, Questrom uses a standard **MBA Resume Format** that presents your candidacy in a consistent, easy to read form. Employers require Questrom formatted resumes for your default resume on our Handshake job application system and BU Questrom MBA Digital Employer Resume book. To efficiently create your resume, read this **MBA Resume Essentials Guide**, review all the comments on the **MBA Resume Template** as well as other key steps to follow through the **CSW - Career Success Workbook & Branding Materials Preparation** document.
- We recommend typing your information directly into the template to ensure consistent formatting.
- **RESUME UPDATES:** You will update your resume throughout your time at Questrom as you start new activities and complete your internship. You will also customize it as you apply for different roles and seek to highlight different skills.
- If you want to make a new resume visible to employers on Handshake, please have it approved by your Primary Career Coach.

RESUME BASICS

- **B*A*R accomplishment statements** are the heart and soul of your resume and are far more powerful than job descriptions.
- These are **bulleted statements** that present your proudest actions-and-results from your professional career.
- **Your accomplishment** statements allow the reader to quickly and clearly understand your strengths and show that you did your job well.

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 of which you are most proud.
- Pick only the best of the best: think "greatest hits" and "most employer relevant".
- An excellent resource would likely be your annual performance reviews and your skills evaluation on your CSW.

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." Additional suggestions can be found in the pdf **185 Powerful Verbs That Will Make Your Resume Awesome.**

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 team of three account executives and two support analysts to produce \$5 million in new revenue and exceed goal 15%.
As HR Manager, duties included saving money on corporate benefits.		Saved 7% over previous years by researching life insurance providers and signing contract with local supplier.

BAR STATEMENTS



First Draft	vs.	Stronger Edit w/details/numbers
Completed project ahead of schedule.		Completed IT project ahead of schedule and \$2K under budget.
Proven track record for system sales.		Sold enterprise software solutions that generated over \$15M additional revenue annually.
Recognized as effective manager.		Promoted 3x in five years and rated as top 10% supervisor for last two years.

BAR STATEMENTS

EXAMPLE SITUATION

BACKGROUND

Company received 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 example delivered two
BAR statements:

- “Reduced customer complaints 33% by successfully establishing hotline to handle inquiries.”
- “Implemented new software to track and resolve customer complaints, decreasing product returns 45%.”

USE QUESTIONS TO DIG DEEPER

If the result of your actions is not immediately clear to you, ask yourself the following questions.

- 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? What did my actions enable or enhance?

Results at the front a bullet can be very powerful.

Explain the result first and then explain what action you took to create that outcome. Other times, bullets make the most sense with the action first, followed by the result.

As you read down the left side of your resume, what story do the first words tell an employer?

SOME MORE EXAMPLES TO INSPIRE YOU

- Expanded client base 10% and increased sales \$300,000 (result) by developing new product based on unmet client needs (action).
- Decreased costs 30% (result) by negotiating with suppliers to reduce price and updating contract payment terms to maximize savings.
- Earned top performance rating (result) by exceeding performance objectives while providing training, data quality and consulting services to pharmaceutical industry (action).
- During time of short staffing (background), trained 10 new staff members and delegated tasks while supervising 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 error in expense processing system before invoice was sent to client (action).
- Ensured firm compliance with new regulations (result) by completing 100% of account remediation by hard deadline (action).
- Increased brand awareness 22% in community (result) by spearheading 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?

- Does it highlight the most relevant information?
- 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 02215 617.555.1212 YourEmail@bu.edu LinkedIn.com/in/YourCustomURL	
EDUCATION	
MBA, Health Sector Management Program Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA • Dean's Scholarship	Expected May 2025
MS, Digital Technology Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA	Expected May 2025
BA, History cum laude Undergraduate College; City, ST • Founder and President of History Enthusiasts Club	May 2013
WORK EXPERIENCE	
MOST RECENT COMPANY; Boston, MA Research Manager Delivered diverse research projects across 7 core policy areas, bringing sound project management and analytical expertise for private financial services firm with \$2M revenues. Managed team of 6 research specialists and reported to Director of Research. Liaised across 5 internal departments to ensure deadlines met. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defined research function and won management approval to triple and manage resulting team of 6 researchers.• Improved efficiency of public records investigations 35% by designing firm-wide protocol, with specialists investigating 2K+ candidates for 200+ searches in 1 year.• Increased speed of file sharing 22% by creating digital library of research materials and collaborating with cross-functional team of 5 to investigate and implement file-sharing platforms, sharing 2K+ files in 2 years.• Collaborated across 5 teams to create industry and function codes for firm's 330K-person database, expanding database querying and reporting capabilities by developing new data extraction.• Prepared statistics, analysis and data visualization for quarterly market reports.• Earned Circle of Excellence Award (Top 10% in Nation) for overall team performance.	2017 to 2023
NEXT TO LAST COMPANY NAME; Kalamazoo, MI Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator (2 years) Supported and oversaw partnerships with existing community groups, while developing and cultivating additional regional alliances for rapidly growing nonprofit start up. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established 24 school partnerships by delivering pitch presentations to stakeholders and connecting with community groups to increase program awareness.• Improved institutional memory by spearheading and managing new record-keeping systems in MS Access.• Proposed, designed, and implemented innovative outreach model to underserved areas, adding 5 affiliate schools.	2013 to 2017
Transportation Sustainability Group Intern (2½ years) Led project to study, design, and implement comprehensive community bike sharing program supporting 10,000 local bikers. Collaborated with 15 partner schools. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motivated 15 allied schools to diversify activities by producing 6 targeted marketing materials.• Identified ideal partner companies by collecting and analyzing market data.• Managed project communications within transportation team, internal departments and external affiliates to ensure aligned messaging and proper contract executions.	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
Technical Skills: Java, Python, SQL, Tableau, Access, Crystal Reports, Excel, ArcGIS, Nexis Boolean Search Languages: Spanish (professional proficiency), French (beginner) Interests: Marathons (NYC, SF, Berlin), Asian fusion cuisine, Jai alai, Habitat for Humanity volunteer	

PLEASE NOTE

Less than 10 years of professional experience or consulting/ investment banking goals: 1 page maximum

10 years professional experience or more: up to 2 pages

NAME

- First and last; middle initial OK.

ADDRESS

- Boston, MA during school. Add zip code as some ATS systems only search by zip code. ATS stands for Applicant Tracking System

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 02215 | 617.555.1212 | YourEmail@bu.edu | LinkedIn.com/in/YourCustomURL

EDUCATION

Degrees listed in reverse chronological order.

MBA and planned concentration or program, with “Expected 2024” listed first.

Consider including (where applicable for BU and undergrad):

- GMAT (only include if score is 700+)
- academic scholarships
- team projects, honors, awards, and leadership roles
- club memberships
- volunteer work on campus
- Latin honors like *cum laude* are listed in *italics*
- Keep degree names consistent. Either spell them all out “Masters of Business Administration”, “Bachelor of Arts”, etc. OR MBA, BA, MS, etc.

EDUCATION

MBA, Health Sector Management Program

Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA

- Dean’s Scholarship

Expected May 2025

MS, Digital Technology

Boston University Questrom School of Business; Boston, MA

Expected May 2025

BA, History *cum laude*

Undergraduate College; City, ST

- Founder and President of History Enthusiasts Club

May 2013

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. Summarize the position's general responsibilities on a high level, as if someone asked you "What do you do?" Did people report to you? Did you handle multiple regions or departments? If you were working for a company that is not well known, include the size and type of company in the scope.

BAR achievement statements (2 lines max). Include **quantitative results when possible**. End with a period.

NEXT TO LAST COMPANY NAME; Kalamazoo, MI

2013 to 2017

Safe Routes to School Outreach Coordinator (2 years) | Supported and oversaw partnerships with existing community groups, while developing and cultivating additional regional alliances for rapidly growing nonprofit start up.

- Established 24 school partnerships by delivering pitch presentations to stakeholders and connecting with community groups to increase program awareness.
- Improved institutional memory by spearheading and managing new record-keeping systems in MS Access.
- Proposed, designed, and implemented innovative outreach model to underserved areas, adding 5 affiliate schools.

Transportation Sustainability Group Intern (2½ years) | Led project to study, design, and implement comprehensive community bike sharing program supporting 10,000 local bikers. Collaborated with 15 partner schools.

- Motivated 15 allied schools to diversify activities by producing 6 targeted marketing materials.
- Identified ideal partner companies by collecting and analyzing market data.
- Managed project communications within transportation team, internal departments and external affiliates to ensure aligned messaging and proper contract executions.

ADDITIONAL INFO

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

Provides additional insights into your character.

Most employer relevant information should be in the beginning of each section.

Capitalize formal nouns. Other information is lower case, i.e. Habitat for Humanity volunteer.

Consider including some combination of:

- Technical skills
- Certifications, memberships and affiliations
- Language proficiencies (List language first then proficiency I.E. Spanish (fluent))

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Technical Skills: Java, Python, SQL, Tableau, Access, Crystal Reports, Excel, ArcGIS, Nexis Boolean Search

Languages: Spanish (professional proficiency), French (beginner)

Interests: Marathons (NYC, SF, Berlin), Asian fusion cuisine, Jai alai, Habitat for Humanity volunteer

- Patents

GENERAL TIPS

- Place most important bullets and other information higher and/or to the left. As recruiters scan your resume, that's what they'll see first.
- Avoid filler words like "a", "the", "an" and possessives like "our" and "their". Your language will be more concise – and focus on relevant text.
- Bullets and scopes start with business/career target relevant action words (verbs) and emphasize results.
- Quantify results. Use numbers throughout your resume. Try for one in every bullet and scope.
- Avoid duplicate words. Find synonyms. For instance, create, develop and devise. Wordclouds.com will give you a counted word list to quickly identify duplication. The "Find" function in Word will help you find repeated words so you can easily substitute.

WORD CLOUDS

WORD CLOUDS can help you see the “real message” your resume is delivering. Test and compare your resume, cover letters, and LinkedIn profile against job postings, either individually (for unique job applications) or several copied and pasted in one word cloud (to identify commonalities in positions of interest).

Go to <https://worditout.com/word-cloud/create>

Copy and paste your resume into the box.

The large words are the most often repeated and, thus, considered more important. Some people prefer the counted word list, with the most important words showing more frequently. Some people find <https://www.jobscan.co/> helpful using the same technique described for word clouds.



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



RESUME EXAMPLE

Your Name

Boston, MA 02215 | 617.555.1212 | YourEmail@bu.edu | LinkedIn.com/in/YourCustomURL

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Undergraduate College; City, ST

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WORK EXPERIENCE

MOST RECENT COMPANY; Boston, MA 2017 to 2023
Research Manager | Delivered diverse research projects across 7 core policy areas, bringing sound project management and analytical expertise for private financial services firm with \$2M revenues. Managed team of 6 research specialists and reported to Director of Research. Liaised across 5 internal departments to ensure deadlines met.

- Defined research function and won management approval to triple and manage resulting team of 6 researchers.
- Improved efficiency of public records investigations 35% by designing firm-wide protocol, with specialists investigating 2K+ candidates for 200+ searches in 1 year.
- Increased speed of file sharing 22% by creating digital library of research materials and collaborating with cross-functional team of 5 to investigate and implement file-sharing platforms, sharing 2K+ files in 2 years.
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