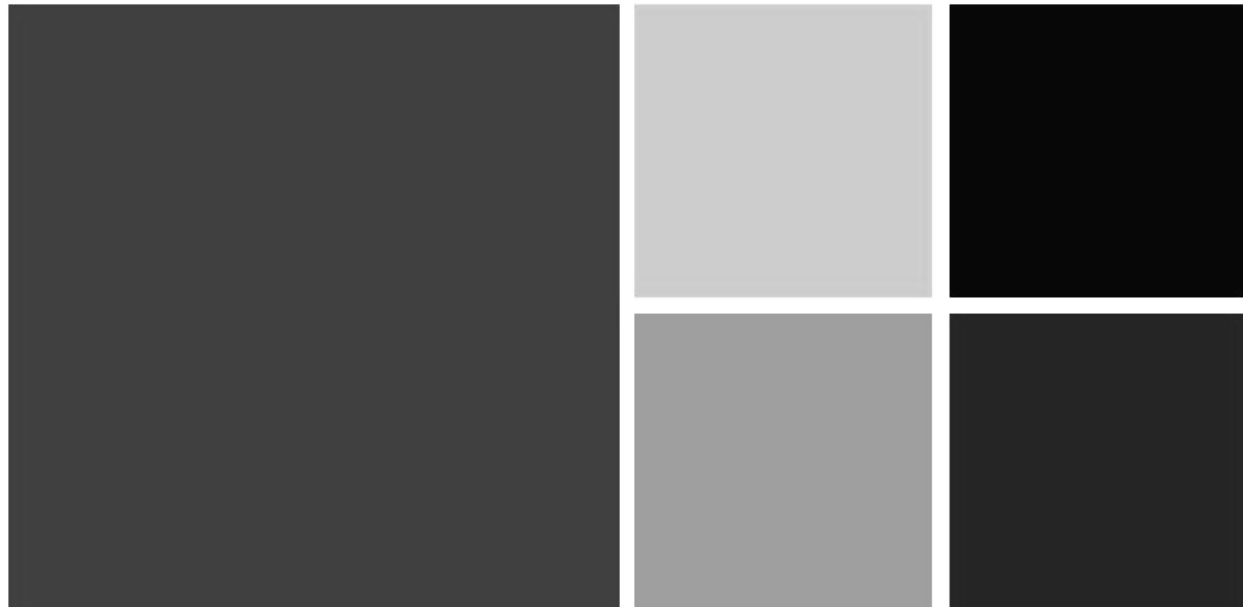


Fall 2014

Commerce Resume Guide

Centre for Business Career Development



Revised June 2014



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INTRODUCTION

Whether you are competing for Internship, summer or full-time employment opportunities, having a professionally prepared resume and cover letter will determine whether or not you get your first interview. It is estimated that employers spend an average of 30-seconds reading a resume/cover letter on the first review. Therefore your resume must speak directly to the employer's needs and clearly demonstrate the value that you will bring to their organization. To maximize the impact of your resume, it must be:



While there is no one right way to craft a resume, this guide will help you present and market your experience and skills in a style and format that is well-received by employers.

For a resume to be effective it must:

1. Show how the skills and accomplishments *you have now* will translate into what you can do *in the future*.
2. Create your personal brand by highlighting your experiences and accomplishments as they relate to the position for which you are applying.
3. Continue to evolve and showcase your personal brand as your skills and knowledge will change with work/school or extracurricular activities.

This guide presents a **6-Step** methodology to resume preparation. Closely follow each step and your resume will be market ready for your ideal position!

TOP RESUME DO'S AND DON'TS



- ✓ Follow a simple and clear format that helps the reader scan information quickly with minimal effort - see **Appendix I** (pg. 33) and **Appendix J** (pg. 35) for recommended formats
- ✓ Highlight at least two or three most relevant skills for each experience and illustrate them using STAR statements
- ✓ Create an interesting read and demonstrate a well-rounded candidate – include volunteer, community activities and personal interests that demonstrate your uniqueness (ex. music, arts, travel, photography)

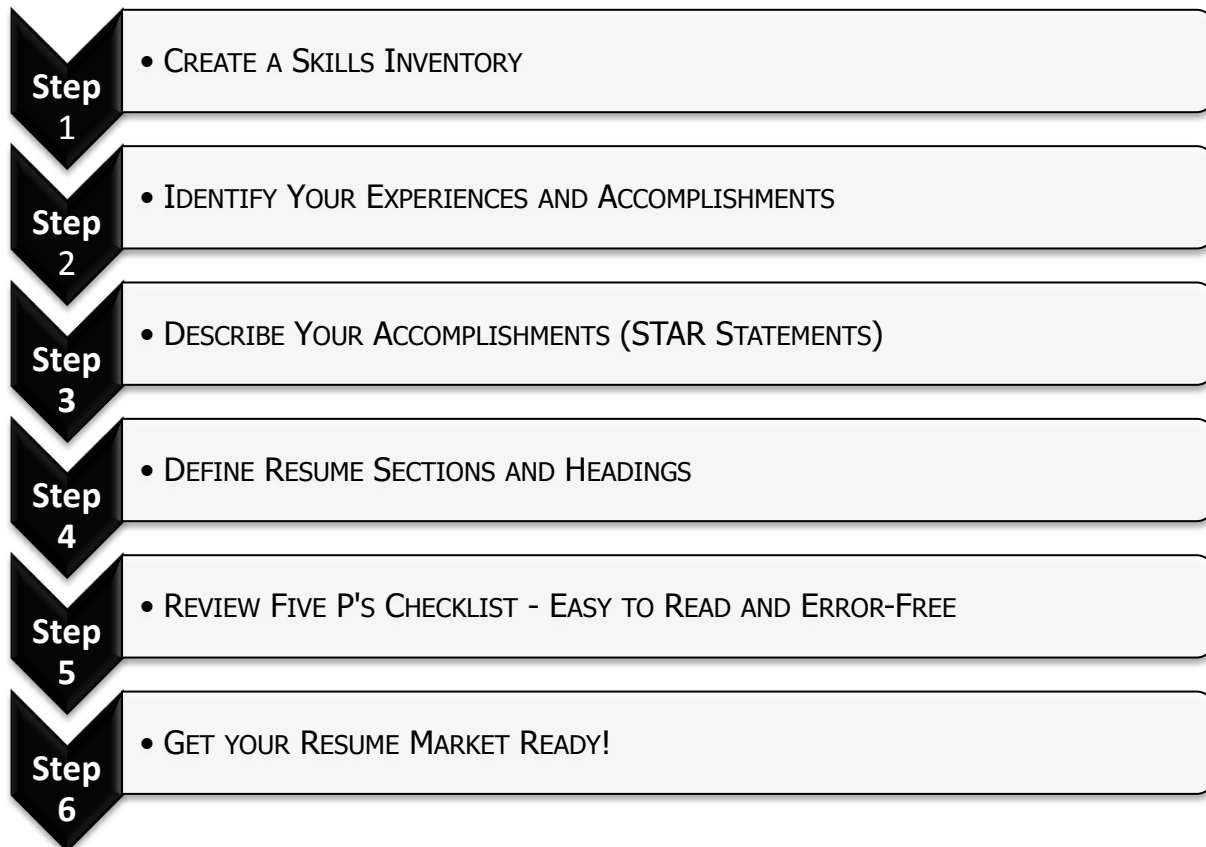
- ✗ Don't use "Responsible for...." at the beginning of your bullets
- ✗ Don't use first person references "I" or "my" anywhere on your resume
- ✗ Don't use vague descriptors such as "many", "entire" or "various" which leaves the reader with questions about specifics - whenever possible, use exact numbers
- ✗ Don't include references to high school activities (after your first year of University)



Remember, creating an error-free resume requires time and editing. To fully maximize your resume potential, continue reading this guide for more tips and tricks to guarantee a resume that is employer ready!

SIX STEPS TO CREATING A MARKET READY RESUME

Where do I Start?



A strong resume cannot get you a job – but it can get you the interview!

STEP 1 – SKILLS INVENTORY

Writing a resume can be intimidating and frustrating. Most students are unsure of where to start, what to include (and in what order), what to say, or how to say it. They are uncomfortable presenting information geared at making themselves look good to others as they don't want to be perceived as bragging.

When writing a resume, the natural place to begin is by reviewing and gathering information about your life experiences. Examined over a period of time, they will reveal patterns of interests, activities, skills and successes that have formed over the years.

To effectively market yourself, you need to have a solid understanding of the product you are promoting – YOU. Do not worry if you have not had significant business experience. By evaluating your past activities (what you have done and/or contributed in school, work and other activities) you will discover aspects of your life that make you distinct and interesting to an employer.

What do Employers Look for in a Top Candidate?

There are 12 major skill categories that are sought by recruiting employers. So, you need to consider how your experiences and achievements relate to these critical skill categories and how to demonstrate them in your resume. **Appendix C** (pg. 22) shows a further breakdown of each category.

Overall, from an employer's perspective, these are key criteria or selection factors when hiring to fill a role. Be sure to keep these criteria in mind when creating your resume.

Organization
Communication Influence
to Learn Service
Training Analytical Presentation
Customer Leadership
Oriented Teaching
Detail Ability
Innovative Quantitative

Career Skills Self-Assessment Exercise

Let's start with exploring your skills to create an inventory which will help you develop your resume.

Completing a self-assessment exercise and creating a skills inventory will not only help with your resume, but it will also help with career planning, cover letter writing and interview preparation. In this exercise, the "raw data" you will need to work with, will be gathered through an evaluation of the past activities that have been most important in making you unique and valuable:

- ✓ Successful accomplishments
- ✓ School contributions
- ✓ Achievements at work
- ✓ Proud moments in other activities

When completing this exercise, reflect on all your experiences to date: school, work, extra-curricular, volunteer, community and even sports teams. Think about your involvement and where you have been able to effectively demonstrate specific skills or where you might benefit from further development.

Refer to **Appendix A** (pg. 18) to complete the **Career Skills Self-Assessment** exercise.

When you have completed the exercise, record your Top 10 skills below.

My Top 10 Skills

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

STEP 2 – IDENTIFY EXPERIENCES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The next step is to organize your experiences into four categories:

1. Education
2. Employment
3. Extra-Curricular Activities
4. Volunteer, Sports and Other Activities

Under each heading, list all activities you have participated in for at least the last five years. As with the Career Skills Assessment, reflect on all your experiences to date: school, work, extra-curricular, volunteer, community, and even sports teams.

See **Appendix B** (pg. 21) for an **Experience Summary Worksheet** to help record your activities.

Now that you have reflected and identified both your skills and past experiences – it's time to put them all together. For each experience listed in your Experience Summary, identify your successful accomplishments and contributions. What have been your proudest moments in these activities?

Use the chart below to record your thoughts and details.

To help with this exercise, we have included questions to ask yourself which will provide a useful framework for reviewing your history. Keep in mind, not all questions will be applicable to each activity or experience. Your answers should accurately and objectively describe your experience.

An example under each experience category is provided to help you get started.

EXPERIENCE CATEGORY		ASK YOURSELF?
Experience:		
What What did you do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What were my duties, responsibilities?• Who did I interact with? How? (Did you train others?)	<i>What can I bring to an employer?</i>
What When did you do it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time of year, length of project, how often?	
What Where did you do it?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School, Group, Company, Location	
What did you accomplish , improve or succeed at?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did I contribute and achieve in my jobs/experiences - skills, knowledge, personal traits, ideas, new approaches• Did you meet or exceed expectations?	<i>What added value did I bring?</i> <i>What did I find enjoyable?</i> <i>What did others commend me for or say "I did well"?</i>
What skills did you demonstrate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills used, new ones developed - think about your Top 10 skills• Ideas, concepts, knowledge• What are my credentials and areas of expertise?	<i>What are my supporting qualifications? (What other skills do I have to offer?)</i>

1. EDUCATION

Experience: <i>University Degree</i>	
What	<i>Honours Bachelor of Commerce, Level X</i>
Where	<i>DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University</i>
When/Time	<i>Expected Completion: April XXXX</i>
Accomplishments	<i>Deans Honour List, Entrance Scholarship</i>
Skills Demonstrated	<i>Problem Solving, Teamwork, Communication</i>
Experience:	
What	
Where	
When/Time	
Accomplishments	
Skills Demonstrated	

2. WORK EXPERIENCE

Experience: <i>Customer Service Representative</i>	
What	<i>Processed banking transactions for clients Answered questions regarding banking products Referred clients to Personal Banking Advisors</i>
Where	<i>TD Canada Trust – Unionville Branch</i>
When/Time	<i>May 2014 – August 2014</i>
Accomplishments	<i>Outstanding performance appraisal, thank you letters from clients</i>
Skills Demonstrated	<i>Customer Service, Communication, Attention to Detail</i>
Experience:	
What	
Where	
When/Time	
Accomplishments	
Skills Demonstrated	

3. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Experience: <i>Volunteer for United Way Bake Sale</i>	
What	<i>Setup venue for sale, Led two student volunteers in pricing all items and selling to customer, Counted and recorded all proceeds</i>
Where	<i>Unionville United Way Chapter</i>
When/Time	<i>November 2013</i>
Accomplishments	<i>Raised \$750</i>
Skills Demonstrated	<i>Time Management, Leadership, Task Delegation</i>
Experience:	
What	
Where	
When/Time	
Accomplishments	
Skills Demonstrated	

4. VOLUNTEER, SPORTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Experience:	
What	
Where	
When/Time	
Accomplishments	
Skills Demonstrated	

STEP 3 – STAR STATEMENTS

To effectively promote your skills and experience to employers, you need to ensure that you are presenting the information in the most effective way. This is done using **STAR** Statements.

STAR statements should be used in the *Work Experience, Extracurricular Activities and Volunteer Activities* sections of your resume to show achievements, accomplishments and results.

By highlighting the results of your actions as well as your skills, attributes and experiences, it will allow employers to see not only what you have done, but how well you did it.

Reflect on your experiences using the **STAR** method:



Skill: Which skill was used?



Time: When did you use that skill?



Action: What specific action did you take?



Results: What impact/outcome was achieved?

When creating your STAR statements, remember to:

- ✓ Use action verbs that add power and impact to your accomplishments. See **Appendix E** (pg. 26)
- ✓ Avoid passive words such as *assisted*, *aided*, and *helped*; as these are weak verbs and do not say what you specifically did.
- ✓ Do not list skills without providing evidence of how and where you demonstrated the skill (avoid being subjective)
- ✓ Briefly explain (with accuracy) the complete story, including the scope and impact of your role, who you partnered with, how, why, or for whom your work was used and your overall contributions
- ✓ Put yourself in the employer's shoes – have you written a clear description?
- ✓ Quantify results – complete your story with the results of your work – what value did you bring to the team and/or company?

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Below is a sample worksheet to help you create your accomplishment-based **STAR** statements:

TARGET MARKET/POSITION: Project Assistant			
SKILL	TIME	ACTION	RESULT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Customer Service Management	January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Monitored service levels and advised customers on product selection based on needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Achieved monthly sales quota of \$1KRecognition from management

Accomplishment (STAR) Statement (what goes on your resume):

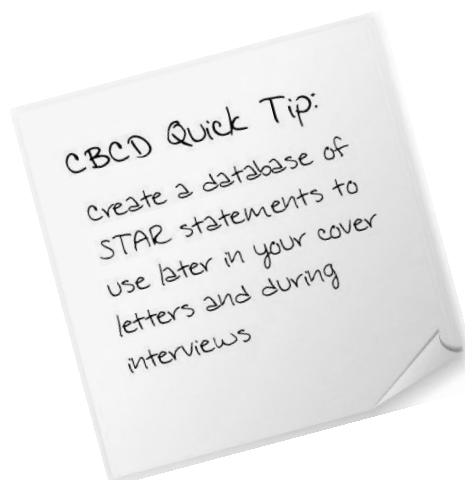
Maintained customer service standards at busy retail store by monitoring service levels during peak times and advising customers on product selection based on needs, resulting in the achievement of a \$1K monthly sales quota and positive feedback from store management.

Let's Practice:

TARGET MARKET/POSITION:			
SKILL	TIME	ACTION	RESULT
<i>Which skill was used?</i>	<i>When did you use that skill?</i>	<i>What specific action(s) did you take?</i>	<i>What impact/outcome was achieved?</i>

Accomplishment (STAR) Statement:

More **STAR** worksheets and lists of action-oriented verbs and phrases are included at the end of this guide in **Appendix D** (pg. 25) and **Appendix C** (pg. 22).



STEP 4 – RESUME SECTIONS

Your resume is more than just a summary of your past experiences. It should accurately reflect who you are and what you have to offer an employer. Use these Resume Sections/Headings to further emphasize your value and present yourself as an essential component to an organization's success.

The sections/headings are presented in the order of how a resume should flow.

EDUCATION	
Variations	EDUCATION AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represents the top 1/3 of your resume Include dates (e.g., Expected date of completion: April 2015) Coursework/Special Projects: include only if relevant to role Do not include a list of specific courses (will be on transcript) Scholarship and Awards – do not include if awarded only for financial need

WORK EXPERIENCE	
Variations	PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE RELATED EXPERIENCE
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place this section after Education STAR statements: accomplishment-oriented bullet points (what, where, how well, context in bigger picture) Include up to five achievements/STAR statements per work experience Reverse chronological order, including dates Don't repeat words - vary the action-verbs used, refer to the detailed list of verbs in Appendix E (pg. 26)

CAREER RELATED SKILLS	
Variations	SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include computer related skills (programs or software) with level of proficiency Include language skills (state level of proficiency and differentiate between oral/written skill) List achievements that would directly enhance brand and relate to role (ie. certificates) Do <u>not</u> simply list words or soft skills (i.e. organized, team player)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	
Variations	EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCE
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is a link to competencies and overall personal brand (use STAR statement for each bullet) Include at a minimum, one achievement or STAR statement per activity Reverse chronological order, including dates Usually includes roles within affiliations, sports memberships, inside of school

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES	
Variations	VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically found on second page as a separate section • Include name of organization or group, city and province if outside of McMaster • Include as part of work experience only if activity directly related to overall career strategy and personal brand • Include at a minimum, one achievement or STAR statement per activity • Ensure there is a link to competencies and overall personal brand

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Variations	PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally included as part of Education section, unless you have more than three, then break it out into a separate heading as suggested above • Include professional memberships and affiliations

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS	
Variations	INTERESTS
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include if relevant to brand and career objective • Include sports teams, dance, drama participation etc. • Be specific, not just "travel" or "music" – include why, what, dates, etc.

STEP 5 – FIVE P’S CHECKLIST

Remember - a resume cannot guarantee you a job, but it can prevent you from getting an interview if you have not presented your skills effectively. Before submitting your resume, use this checklist to help you critically review your resume to ensure that it is *easy to read* and *error-free*.

The Five P’s Checklist

(Packaging, Positioning, Power, Personality, Professionalism)

PACKAGING	
Font <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize a readable, professional looking font, 10 or 11 point (Tahoma, Arial, Verdana), use only one font type throughout resume Ensure consistency of font size throughout resume (exception: make headings 1-2 points larger) Name no larger than 16 pt Use small, round bullets (be consistent) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formatting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not use templates, create your own Word document Single spacing within each section Visual presentation - margins should be no less than 0.5" and no greater than 1" (0.7" or 0.8" generally look good), and even on both left and right sides and top and bottom) For two-page resumes, ensure your name, contact information and page # are on top of page two For two-page resumes, ensure that the text covers over ½ of the second page – if not be creative with margins, font size, space between headings to reduce to one page or extend to two full pages Use the same heading format for your resume and cover letter Do not continue activity description/bullets onto next page – keep text on same page 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not use graphics or colour 	<input type="checkbox"/>
POSITIONING	
Order of Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resume should read in reverse chronological order under each section/heading Your resume is about YOU, not the school, company or date, so your degree(s) and position(s) should be on the first line, while the school, organizations and dates are on line two EDUCATION: Degree, major/specialization on first line, in bold University name, location, and date (positioned at right margin) on second line, not bold (italics are preferred) WORK EXPERIENCE: Position/title and department (if relevant) should appear on first line, in bold Company name, location, and date (at right margin) on second line, not in bold (italics are preferred) Write months out in full - no abbreviations (i.e. September 2013 – June 2014) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
First Impressions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First page of resume must include the strongest content The employer takes less than 30 seconds to determine if they want to read further – ensure that you have the relevant information that will capture his/her interest 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Continued →

POWER	
Achievement Orientation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make use of STAR statements to demonstrate what, why, how, when, and the result or achievement Work experience must include results/outcomes (quantify where possible) Do not simply list your duties or tasks Do not use "Responsible for" - it is weak and passive 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Action Verbs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use past tense, even if currently in role Avoid vague descriptors and subjective claims (many, entire, various, responsible for, assisted), be specific Use different descriptors and verbs throughout document – limit word and phrase repetition 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullet Points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize bullet points (3 - 5 points per work experience) One sentence only per bullet point; use semicolons to connect similar/related ideas into one bullet Most significant and/or relevant aspects of role should be in first bullet, then followed by bullets in descending order of importance Ensure consistent use of periods throughout resume (all or none) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Objectivity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not use "I / my" (personal pronouns) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-Traditional Experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include transferable skills from non-traditional experiences (outside business environments) 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Omissions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not include references to High School Do not include dollar value of scholarships Do not include references or "references available upon request" (it is assumed you will provide, if requested) Do not include an Objective Statement/Career Profile/Summary of Skills at the top of your resume 	<input type="checkbox"/>
PERSONALITY	
Make it Unique to You <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize sections under community/volunteer/activities and interests to demonstrate your well-roundedness as a candidate by promoting your extracurricular involvement Don't underestimate the value of any experience (i.e. summer employment, family business) Create an interesting read, i.e. Music (Do you play an instrument? Go to concerts? Favorites? Which type of music – Jazz? Classical? Teach?) Include interests that demonstrate your uniqueness (such as photography, art, film/cinema, car rallies, food and wine, skiing, etc). 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concise and Varied <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce your word count ("to" vs. "in order to") Prune your words - avoid word repetition (same verbs to describe all accomplishments) Minimize use of semicolons 	<input type="checkbox"/>
PROFESSIONALISM	
Error-free <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure no spelling or grammar mistakes 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using Numbers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell out numbers, one to ten, use numbers for 11 and above Avoid adding the word "dollar" after \$200 (symbol identifies this as a dollar amount) To maximize space, use \$100K instead of \$100,000 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abbreviations/ Acronyms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell out months, years and university degrees in full Avoid using abbreviations, except for Provinces and States (ON, AB, NY) If using acronyms, spell out completely the first time, followed by acronym in brackets; acronym can then be used for rest of document 	<input type="checkbox"/>

STEP 6 – FINAL CHECK

Does my resume reflect the brand I want to represent and is it effectively communicating this brand to employers?

To ensure that your resume is now market ready and attractive to employers, use the following questions to determine if your resume is effectively demonstrating the skills required of your target market and position.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Does my resume demonstrate my unique skills, abilities and experience?
- What key competencies are currently highlighted on my resume? Do they align with the position to which I am applying?
- How does my resume differentiate me from the competition?
- Are the bullet points on my resume achievement-oriented and quantifiable? Do they follow the STAR method?
- Does my resume create interest, describe accomplishments and validate results with quantifiable evidence?
- Are there any gaps? What skills are missing? (*Look at all sections of your resume: Work Experience, Career Skills, Extracurricular and Volunteer Activities, Interests, etc.*)
- Is my resume easy to read and does it flow logically?

Your resume is a document that will continue to evolve as you progress in your career. Make sure that you are constantly updating your resume as you gain new skills and experiences.

HOW CAN CBCD SUPPORT YOU?

Attend a Workshop: CBCD offers Resume workshops at the beginning of each academic term. Visit the Business Events calendar on OSCARplus (www.oscarplustmcmaster.ca) to register for a session. This workshop teaches you how to create a powerful resume that will catch an employer's attention!

Submit your resume for critique: Visit the CBCD office to drop-off your resume and have it reviewed by a Relationship Manager. In return, you will receive tips and suggestions to ensure that your resume is employer ready. All resumes are returned within a four business day turnaround.

Book a Coaching Session: Schedule a 30-minute coaching session with a Relationship Manager for help with creating or editing your resume. Book your appointment online through OSCARplus (www.oscarplustmcmaster.ca) under Commerce Appointments.

APPENDIX A: Career Skills Self-Assessment

As we go through life, we gather many skills from our past experiences. Review the list of 55 skills summarized below. For each skill, identify your ability level by placing a checkmark under the appropriate section. Review the skills that you have marked as “Well Developed” and choose your Top 10 skills to summarize in the chart on page 7.

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS		WELL DEVELOPED	SOME EXPERIENCE	NEEDS DEVELOPMENT
1. Analytical	Examine carefully and in detail; identify key issues using critical thought	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Balance	Reconcile debt and credit in an account			
3. Budget	Make a plan for spending and avoid undue expenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Calculate	Solve problems using a mathematical procedure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Classify	Arrange and order by categories; group by a system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Computer Applications	Work effectively with popular computerized word processing, spreadsheet, database and/or presentation software	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Coordinate	Arrange in a harmonious operation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Communication	A strong command of oral and written communication; or the ability to speak more than one language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Design/Create	Work out the structure or form of something and/or invent or make a plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Develop Programs	Design or plan a syllabus or program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Edit	Prepare text for publication by checking and improving its accuracy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Estimate/Appraise	Formulate an opinion or an approximate cost or calculation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Evaluate	Judge or assess the worth of a process or output	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Examine	Review or put tasks together in order to test knowledge or ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Exhibit	Display or arrange a display for others to appreciate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Generate Ideas	Produce or give rise to plans or new thoughts; creative thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Inspect	Look over carefully to examine for fault or error	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Interpret	Clarify or explain meaning; translate complex ideas into everyday language	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. Interview	Assess an applicant to find congruency with an organization, position or other opportunity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

		<i>WELL DEVELOPED</i>	<i>SOME EXPERIENCE</i>	<i>NEEDS DEVELOPMENT</i>
20. Investigate	Make a systematic inquiry; explore or scrutinize	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Listen	To hear something, take note	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Measure	Find out size, quality, capacity, etc. of something; estimate by some standard or rule	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Monitor	To closely watch over a process or project and/or record activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Observe	Examine for a special purpose, follow in practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Organize and Plan	Think out beforehand how something is to be made or done; give order or structure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Present/Public Speaking	Share information verbally to a group or audience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Problem Solving	Identify and diagnose a problem to get a root cause; develop innovative, effective solutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Project Management	Perform all tasks to complete a project; plan, organize, coordinate, monitor, delegate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. Promote or Sell	Inspire others with the desire to buy, possess or agree to something	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Record	Set down in some permanent form as to present facts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Research	Search or inquire into something thoroughly; collect information on a subject	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. Schedule	Plan or arrange something for a future date	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. Strategic Thinking	See the "big picture"; conceptualize ideas, models, relationships, integrate and synthesize information from different perspectives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. Survey	Make critical, detailed and formative observations; acquire samples	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. Test	Carry out examinations on a material, program or system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36. Written Communication	State in writing; compose for publication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

More on next page →

TEAMWORK SKILLS				
		WELL DEVELOPED	SOME EXPERIENCE	NEEDS DEVELOPMENT
37. Advise	Inform and/or counsel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. Counsel/Coach	Mentor, support, provide guidance and/or give advice to a student/employee etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. Customer Service	Make a real difference to customers; help someone, or give information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. Delegate	Appoint or entrust with a task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41. Diversity	Demonstrate a sensitivity and awareness of other people and cultures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
42. Enforce	Ensure observance of or obedience to policies, procedures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
43. Influence or Persuade	Urge or prevail upon successfully; convince	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
44. Leadership	Ability to take charge of situation or people, lead towards common goal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
45. Motivate	Give incentive to someone or stimulate an interest in them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
46. Negotiate	Work or talk with others to achieve an amicable agreement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
47. Network	Build relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
48. Teach/Train	Show how to do something; give instructions or lessons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
49. Teamwork/Work with Others	Work together with a group of people on a task, project or goal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS				
50. Adaptability	Being open to new ideas and concepts, working independently or as part of team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
51. Goal Oriented	Has drive to succeed and excel at tasks, strives to exceed expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
52. Interpersonal	Gain trust and respect of others; relate to diverse people; be sensitive to people's needs and feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
53. Initiative	Takes initiative to improve a situation or task	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
54. Multitask	Prioritize to best meet customers'/organizations' needs; work effectively to meet multiple deadlines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
55. Professionalism	Acting in a responsible and fair manner in all personal and work activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Sources:

Employability Skills 2000+ - <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/topics/education/learning-tools/employability-skills.aspx>
 Top Skills and Values Employers Seek from Job-Seekers - http://www.quintcareers.com/job_skills_values.html

RECORD YOUR TOP 10 SKILLS IN THE CHART ON PAGE 7

APPENDIX B: Experience Summary

Education (diplomas, degrees, awards, scholarships)
•
•
•
•
•
•
•

Work Experience
•
•
•
•
•
•
•

Extra-Curricular Activities (student clubs, conferences, competitions)
•
•
•
•
•
•
•

Other Activities (volunteer, sports)
•
•
•
•
•
•
•

APPENDIX C: Action Oriented Words and Phrases

The following lists can help you develop STAR statements for your activities; these are examples of activities that demonstrate the skills employers are seeking. **Use them to help you get started, however you must add specific details and results to show how and where you demonstrated these skills.**

LEADERSHIP SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• independently moved into totally new situations• took initiative in developing relationships• continually searching for more responsibility• excellent at organizing my time/time of others• works without supervision/self-directed• unwilling to automatically accept status quo• keen perception of the potential of things rather than accepting status quo• acts as agent of change/promote major changes• plans, initiates, affects change• sees a problem and acts immediately to solve it• deals well with the unexpected or critical issues• able to act decisively in emergencies• adept at confronting others with difficult personal matters• no fear of taking manageable/educated risks• adept at policy making• able to terminate projects/people/processes when necessary• inspiring, motivating, and leading organized groups• skilled at chairing meetings• leads others/impresses others with charisma and enthusiasm
ABILITY TO PERFORM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• confidently participates in group settings• poised in public appearances• exceptional speaking ability• articulates/stimulates people and generates enthusiasm• understands value of the ridiculous in illuminating reality• conducting and directing public affairs and ceremonies• develops strong, artistic (visual) presentations
INFLUENCE/PERSUASION SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• establishes rapport quickly• inspires trust in minds of others• expert in reasoning persuasively/developing a thought• influences the attitudes, ideas of others• promotes ideas, products effectively without tearing down competing ideas or products• sells program or course of action to decision-makers• develops markets for ideas/products• motivates others and stimulate them to action• gets diverse groups to work together, adept at conflict management• mediates between contending parties or groups• negotiates to joint decisions• crisis intervention

DETAIL AND RESULTS ORIENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • follows detailed instructions • expert at meeting deadlines, within budget • skilled at making arrangements for events, processes • adept at finding ways to speed up a job • able to handle a variety of tasks and responsibilities simultaneously and efficiently • works well under stress and can still improvise • keen and accurate memory for detail • excels at systematic ordering and manipulating of data • collates data accurately and compares with previous data
NUMERICAL/ACCOUNTING/FINANCIAL SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high accuracy in computing • financial planning and management/maintain financial records • conducts economic research and analysis • performs cost analyses, estimates, projections, comparisons • develops a budget/budget planning, preparation, justification, administration, review • skilled at allocating scarce financial resources • prepares financial reports • uses numbers as reasoning tool/sophisticated mathematical abilities • effective at solving statistical problems
COMMUNICATION SKILLS/ABILITY TO CONVEY IDEAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expresses self clearly, effectively; intelligently expresses a position • able to explain difficult or complex ideas, concepts, problems • verbal/linguistic skills in foreign language(s) • adept at translating jargon into meaningful terms • explicit and concise writing skills • flair for writing reports and speeches (technical or otherwise) • creates imaginative advertising and publicity programs • relates well in dealing with the public • excels at customer relations, services
HUMAN RELATIONS/HELPING/SERVICE SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sensitive to other's needs • keen ability to relate to people • listens intently and accurately/conveys awareness • expertise in interpersonal contact • tactful, diplomatic, discrete • effective in dealing with different kinds of people • works well as part of a team/collaborates with colleagues skillfully • motivates others • readily willing to share credit with others and express appreciation • works well in hostile environment/handles difficult customers/employees tactfully and effectively • able to ignore undesirable qualities in others • thorough understanding of human motivations • adept at helping people with life/work adjustments

INSTRUCTIONAL/EDUCATIONAL SKILLS

- fosters a stimulating learning environment
- adept at using visual communications
- advises/aids people in making decisions
- ability to hear and answer questions perceptively
- keen ability to help others express their views
- facilitates personal growth and development of others
- clarifies goals, values of others
- designs educational events/organizes and administers in-house training programs
- trains/group facilitating/provides leadership to groups, encourages discussion

OBSERVATION SKILLS/ABILITY TO LEARN

- highly observant of people, data, things
- skilled listener
- committed to personal growth and learning
- learns from example of others
- assesses and identifies potential in others
- assesses situations quickly and accurately
- instinctively understands political realities

ORGANIZATION AND PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- approaches goal-setting systematically
- establishes effective priorities among competing requirements
- policy formation and interpretation
- excels at program development, planning
- skilled at planning well-run meetings, seminars
- adept at bringing order to chaotic environment
- brings people together in cooperative efforts
- able to call in experts/helpers as required
- recognizes and utilizes skills of others
- creates and maintains on-time work schedules
- coordinates operations and details
- assesses the effectiveness of other people
- property, plant, facilities management
- makes decisions about others and supervises/manages the output of others

RESEARCH/ANALYSIS/EVALUATION SKILLS

- anticipates situations before they become problems
- recognizes the need for more information to make an intelligent decision
- skilled at clarifying problems or situations
- adept at gathering information
- analyzes community needs, values, resources
- perceives and defines cause and effect relationships
- ability to trace problems to their source
- organizes material, information in a systematic manner
- excels at problem-solving, trouble-shooting
- reviewing and evaluating proposals by measurable or subjective criteria
- high level of decision-making skills, not afraid to re-evaluate programs, decisions, ideas

APPENDIX D: STAR Worksheet Template

TARGET MARKET/POSITION:			
SKILL	TIME	ACTION	RESULT

Accomplishment Statement:

TARGET MARKET/POSITION:			
SKILL	TIME	ACTION	RESULT

Accomplishment Statement:

TARGET MARKET/POSITION:			
SKILL	TIME	ACTION	RESULT

Accomplishment Statement:

APPENDIX E: Action Words

Using “action words” when describing your past experience helps to convey the impression that you have taken action and achieved results in the past. Action words also help to demonstrate and describe your uniqueness. To help simplify the resume writing process and to demonstrate consistency throughout your resume, we suggest that you keep all of your verbs in the ***past tense***.

GENERAL VERBS AND DESCRIPTORS

affected	effected	monitored	revised
accelerated	eliminated	motivated	scheduled
accepted	encouraged	observed	served
achieved	enjoyed	obtained	set priorities
acted	established	organized	set up
adapted	evaluated	participated	shaped
administered	examined	performed	significantly
approved	excelled	persuaded	simplified
assisted	expanded	pinpointed	solved
automated	expedited	planned	sparked
collected	facilitated	practiced	strategize
completed	followed through	predicted	streamlined
composed	found	prepared	strengthened
comprehend	generated	presented	structured
conceived	guided	prioritized	studied
concentrated on	handled	produced	successfully
conducted	heavily involved in	programmed	supplied
conferred	helped	proposed	synthesized
copied	identified	provided	taught
created	improved	purchased	tended
debated	increased	recommended	tested
delegated	influenced	recorded	translated
delivered	interpreted	reduced	trimmed
demonstrated	investigated	reinforced	tutored
designed	launched	reorganized	upgraded
developed	led	reported	utilized
directed	maintained	represented	wrote
displayed	manipulated	researched	
distributed	mediated	revamped	
edited	modified	reviewed	

WORDS RELATED TO ABILITIES AND SKILLS

ability to	counseled	lectured	strong dedication to
adept at	created	mastered	supervised
analyzed	delegated	operated	taught
appraised	developed	performed	technical competence in
aptitude for	assisted	planned	thorough understanding
artistically presented	implemented	practiced	trained
assembled	increased productivity	proficient in	understood
built	increased profit	recruited	well versed in
capable of	initiated	reduced expenses	worked well with others
communicated	innovated	repaired	wrote
composed	installed	scheduled	
conceived	instructed	solved problems	
constructed	interviewed	strength in	

WORDS STRESSING ABILITY TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY

accelerated	guided corporate	operated	solid foundation in
accepted responsibility	policies	planned	sound overview of
alerted	handled	prime emphasis on	sparked
automated	handled stress	prioritized	streamlined
concentrated on	heavily involved in	processed	strong dedication to
controlled	identified	produced	well versed in
coordinated	implemented	revamped	worked well under
drove	improved	scheduled	pressure
guided	increased efficiency	shaped and directed	
	independent		

WORDS AND PHRASES WHICH INDICATE DESIRE TO GET AHEAD

accepted responsibility	enormous capacity	improved	results-oriented
action-oriented	entrepreneurial	invented	self-motivated
adapted	viewpoint	launched	strategic
compulsive drive	high-energy person	met deadlines	success-oriented

WORDS REFERING TO COMPETENCE WITH DATA

analyzed	completed	evaluated	summarized
automated	computed	filed	synthesized
calculated	coordinated	formulated	
compared	copied	memorized	
compiled	estimated	solved	

WORDS AND PHRASES TO INDICATE MANAGEMENT ABILITY

administered	inspired confidence
advised	instituted
aptitude for	involved
authority over	led
built	leadership ability
capable of formulating and directing	managed
capacity for	mastered
closely supervised	motivated
command respect	negotiated
conducted	operated
constructed	organized
controlled	oversaw
coordinated	promoted
decision maker	recommended
delegated	recruited
directed	reorganized
drove	set up
effective in	shaped
established	spearheaded
expanded	strict control of
founded	strong leader
guided	successful with people
headed	supervised
high-level supervisory skills	took charge of
hired	trained
in charge of	well-grounded
increased productivity	willing to take the initiative
initiated	

WORDS AND PHRASES TO SHOW PROFIT ORIENTATION

ability to trim costs and increase efficiency	increased profit
ability to identify and solve problems	problem solver
organizational cost cutting measures	profit-conscious
bookkeeping	profit-minded
budgeted	raised funds
controlled spiraling costs	reduced excessive costs
cost-oriented	results-oriented
curtailed spending	set priorities
drastically cut without reduced sales	shortcut to
efficient	simplified procedures
eliminated bottlenecks	sold
expense-minded	streamlined
generated cost savings	strict control of

WORDS AND PHRASES WHICH STRESS COMPETENCE

ability to	energetic about	perform well under	self-motivated
demonstrated	enthusiastic about	pressure	skillful
knowledgeable	expertly trained	persistent	strength in
confident in	passionate about	results-oriented	thoroughly trained in

WORDS REFERRING TO COMPETENCE WITH OTHERS

advised	encouraged	participated	signaled
communicated	listened	partnered with	spoke to
cooperated	helped	persuaded	supervised
crises intervention	instructed	resolved	team player
developed support/trust	mentored	respected	understood
diverted	negotiated	served	

WORDS OR PHRASES THAT REFLECT INTELLIGENCE

able to think analytically	common sense	creative
fast-thinking	good memory	idea generation
inquisitive	logical thinker	mental capacity
numerical ability	perceptive	probing mind

*Adapted from: The Complete Do-It-Yourself Resume Manual, H.A. Bezanson,
Fleetwood Communications, 1985*

APPENDIX F: Pruning Your Words

You want to re-read your resume to spot redundancies. Identify and correct these common errors:

- Repetitive words throughout resume, especially in the same sentence – substitute with an alternative key word
- Bullets that are not specific or concise – include specific details and results

<u>Wordy Phrase</u>	<u>Pruned Phrase</u>
at the location of	at
for the reason that	because
in a short time	soon
in a timely manner	on time
in spite of everything to the contrary	nevertheless
in the event of	if
in the proximity of	near
now and then	occasionally
on a daily basis	daily
on a regular basis	regularly
on account of	because
one day from now	tomorrow
would you be so kind as to	please

Adapted from: Resume Magic, Susan Britton Whitcomb

APPENDIX G: Finance Resume Guidelines

Packaging

- Should be no longer than one page in length, however, see CBCD Quick Tip below
- Font size is 10 point and a clean (sans-serif) font is recommended, such as Arial
- Student's contact information should be no larger than size 14 font
- 0.5 to 0.75" margins to eliminate excess white space

Correct Notation of CFA on Resume (under Education)

Level I Candidate in the CFA Program

Candidates must not cite the expected date of completion.

Emphasize your Accomplishments

Show *quantifiable* results of your work – this is critical when writing finance resumes. For example,

"Consolidated outstanding accounts receivable resulting in savings of \$40K"

Keyword Phrases

Finance recruiters will scan through resumes to identify key terms – listed below are examples to include throughout your resume:

Fixed asset accounting
Risk management
Value added analysis
Financial projections
General ledger
Trial balance
Budget management
Forecasting

Financial statements
Expense analysis
Tax reporting
Tax planning
P&L management
Auditing and compliance
Operating and working capital
Cash flow management

Additional Resources

- www.vault.com – access through *Avenue to Learn*
- Killer Investment Banking Resumes (www.wetfeet.com)
- Resumes for Banking and Financial Careers – VGM Career Books, 2001
- Careers in Financial Markets Guide (www.efinancialcareers-canada.com)



APPENDIX H: Online Resources for More Resume Tips

Access valuable resources on CBCD's Course on *Avenue to Learn*: <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>

Vault.com – Career Insider

The Vault Guide to Resumes, Cover Letters and Interviewing delivers all the information you need to prepare for your job search. From developing professional resumes and tailored cover letters to effective interview preparation, this popular Vault guide is a comprehensive job search source.

Other online resources:

www.wetfeet.com

Several resume building articles are available on this website including:

- Basic Resume Do's and Don'ts
- Looking Good on Paper
- Debunking Common Resume Myths
- Deliver a Perfect e-Resume
- Solving Common Resume Problems

www.quintcareers.com - Quintessential Careers

This online resource is full of ideas and tips to create an effective resume, unique cover letter and techniques for presenting a professional image in an interview.

APPENDIX I: Sample Two Page Resume

Jane M. Smith

Address, City, Province A1B 2C3
(905) XXX-XXXX • janesmith@mcmaster.ca

EDUCATION

Honours Bachelor of Commerce, Level 4

DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

September 2011 - Present

- Area of focus: Accounting, Pursuing Minor in Economics
- Entrance Scholarship
- Dean's Honour List, 2011, 2012
- Member of Golden Key Honour Society, September 2012 – present
- Participated in 16-month Commerce Internship, IBM
- Expected date of completion: April 2014

WORK EXPERIENCE

Sales and Operations Support

IBM Canada, Markham, ON

May 2013 - August 2014

- Conducted and distributed midweek metrics and forecasting to Canadian Mid-market TeleCoverage sales force which improved forecasting accuracy.
- Implemented and trained four new sales representatives on new Forecasting template and sales growth strategy for 2012, which allowed individuals to update and manipulate data as required.
- Prepared Personal Business Commitment packages for representatives and Manager, improving internal customer relations.
- Created e-contact customer list and new tracking system in Microsoft Access identifying new business leads for national sales force.
- Recognized in Thanks! Award Program, for "Excellent Sales Support and Willingness to Learn", and for "Quickly Picking up the Role and Adding Value to the Team".

Shift Supervisor

Starbucks Coffee, Hamilton, ON

September 2012 - August 2013

- Led and directed a team of 12; received MUG (Moves of Uncommon Greatness) award for receiving 99 percent store 'Snapshot' based on excellent service provided to secret shopper.
- Delegated tasks such as brewing coffee, cashier, cleaning front or barrister based on personal strengths and interests to a team of six shift employees, which motivated them to perform tasks to best of ability.
- Brainstormed with other supervisors to design and implement new strategies to improve store dynamic; created communication log increasing consistency in delivery of store and promotions announcements.
- Coached 16 new employees, one-on-one and delegated responsibility with respect, resulting in increased speed and service to patrons.
- Analyzed inventories of coffee and paper supplies created stock orders and partnered with suppliers ensuring shipments delivered on time.

Employment Clerk, Administration Office

Mohawk College, Hamilton, ON

April – August 2011

- Completed typing, printing, and assembly of custom courseware manuals and course outlines to optimize the operations of the office.
- Prepared databases and performed merges for large mail-outs using Word ensuring timely distribution to external clients.
- Handled reception of visitors, transfer of calls, answered general inquiries, delivering quality customer service and upholding the brand standard of the college.

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, including; Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Access
- Basic knowledge of HTML programming
- French: strong understanding of written communications with basic competency in oral

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Member, DeGroot Accounting Association

September 2013 – Present

- Attended three presentations by industry experts and CA Night to enhance industry knowledge and network with professionals

Participant, McMaster DECA U Business Competition

January 2013

- Competed in a marketing simulation business case with a team of four, designed marketing plan and promotional strategy for fictional company in the consumer packaged goods industry; placing in the Top 3.

Welcome Week Greensuit, DeGroot Commerce Society

September 2012

- Directed traffic and unloaded belongings for over 600 first year Commerce students during Welcome Week, effectively transitioning them to the university and campus.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Volunteer, Hamilton Cancer Assistance Program, Hamilton, ON

March 2012 – present

- Worked with Coordinator to organize four annual events and raised over \$1K annually for the Hamilton Cancer Society.
- Recruited and trained over nine student volunteers for telethon promotions, allowing organization to meet monthly targets for fundraising.

Administrative Assistant, Ontario Ball Hockey League, Hamilton, ON

June 2011 – July 2012

- Organized practice and tournament dates and collected fees from players to ensure smooth execution of the league each week.

INTERESTS

- Sports – recreational swimming, snowboarding
- Travel – backpacked across India and Turkey

May - August 2011

APPENDIX J: Sample One Page Resume

Jane M. Smith

Address, City, Province A1B 2C3 • (416) XXX-XXXX • janesmith@mcmaster.ca

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Honours Bachelor of Commerce, Level 3

DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

September 2011 – Present

- Area of focus: Finance
- Dean's Honour List, 2012
- Expected date of completion: April 2015

Canadian Securities Course

December 2012

WORK EXPERIENCE

Employment Clerk, Office Administration and Business Departments

Mohawk College, Hamilton, ON

April – August 2013

- Successfully completed typing, printing, and assembly of custom courseware manuals and course outlines for professors which increased their productivity.
- Prepared databases and performed merges for large mail-outs using Microsoft Word; mail-outs were used to attract new vendors to college.
- Effectively managed reception of visitors, transfer of calls, and answered general inquiries leading to higher operational efficiencies.
- Performed general office duties for office manager, including filing, photocopying, faxing, mail distribution, disk formatting, and supply ordering.

Camp Counselor, Sport Fitness School

McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

June – August 2012

- Supervised 11 children, ages seven through ten, facilitating daily activities focused on basketball skill development and team building.
- Created half-day workshop comprised of team drills and aids to promote the development of fundamental skills such as ball handling, shooting and defence strategies.
- Organized Level One First-Aid training workshop for six counselors, partnering with local unit of Canadian Red Cross, preparing all counselors to become certified.

CAREER RELATED SKILLS

- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite, including; Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Fluent in French, oral and written communication

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

- Travel – backpacked across India and Turkey May - August 2011
- Long-distance running – enjoy participating in marathon events; competed in three events to date