

# Gabelli 2013 - Junior Advising Program

## Guide to Resumes



### 1. **Keep the reader in Mind**

A recruiter has to read hundreds, if not thousands, of resumes. Therefore, in order to do their job efficiently, they have to figure out ways to more or less create two piles: “Read” or “Toss.” So, with that in mind...

#### a. **Be Brief.**

Don't waste their time with long-winded descriptions. A good rule of thumb is to take up the full line. So, on the one hand, don't have three or five word descriptions, but on the other hand, try not to write a paragraph, either.

Additionally, as a college student, don't let your resume go beyond one page

#### b. **Be Thorough**

When coming up with bulletpoints to describe jobs, most people just answer “What did you do?” However, that alone can be limiting, so take it a step further for a more thorough description: Also answer “Why did you do that?” and “What were the results?” So for example, something basic like “Performed stockroom inventory” could become “Regularly inventoried merchandise to prevent waste, resulting in a more organized stockroom and reduced costs.”

Additionally, don't be afraid to quantify and qualify. For example, it's one thing to say that you took care of customers. It's another thing altogether to say you took care of over a hundred customers a day for eight hour shifts. The details can make something impressive.

#### c. **Be Truthful.**

Don't exaggerate or stretch the truth in any way. Any short term gain you may receive is not worth the potential for disaster and the prospect of being blacklisted. Present what you did as well as the results you achieved honestly.

Also, make sure you and your resume match. Some people try to tailor their resume to the job. To a certain extent, that's fine, as long as you're honest (for example, if the job requires Photoshop skills, and you only mention briefly in your resume for other jobs, you'd probably go into a bit more detail about it for this particular job if you have the requisite experience). However, if you play up minor experiences as major ones (for example: you used MS Access once for data entry but you wind up claiming to be a database expert), then they may start to get one set of expectations that will be quickly dismissed during the interview process – to your detriment.

**d. Be Proud**

At the same time, some people worry so much about being accurate, that they actually downplay their accomplishments because they think it's the safest thing to do. Don't do that. Instead, be proud of what you did by saying so. As long as it's true, you should feel confident in taking credit for what you did. This gets back to being through, when you should ask yourself what you accomplished. Another way to think about it: Did you make something more efficient? Did you come up with a new process of doing something? Did you reduce costs? Did you foresee a problem and take the appropriate action?

**e. Be Grammatically Correct.**

The only real writing is re-writing. A resume is not something you write quickly and just send off. You can go through dozens of drafts before you're even comfortable with it. As such, your resume should be the most polished piece of writing you ever commit to paper. Even one typo shows a recruiter that you didn't read it fully and that they shouldn't waste their time finishing it. They do not owe you a second chance when there are many more resumes to get through by people who at least bothered to read their resume over properly. So, weed out typos and make sure you don't just rely on spell check because that can lead to all sorts of errors.

**f. Look to see if they already explicitly tell you what they want in a resume.**

Some of the larger firms have robust websites with a career services or human resource section that explicitly says how they like their resumes to look and what information it should contain.

**2. Keep the industry in mind when you describe what you did**

You always want to describe your experiences in a way that you can relate to the recruiter; even if it had nothing to do with the industry. Think of it this way: the point of a resume is to paint a picture for the reader in order to show them what skills or qualities you have (or have developed), which are applicable to the job you're interested in – even if the industry seemingly has nothing to do with what you were doing. So, for example, let's say a guy who worked as a little league coach was applying to a Finance internship. Well, he wouldn't just say "coached kids" or "picked out plays." Instead, he'd say

*If you have any questions, please contact your Junior Class Dean,  
Alan Cafferkey – cafferkey@fordham.edu*

something like “Organized multiple 10-12 year olds...,” “Kept records on X, Y, & Z...,” “Ensured all regulations were adhered to for...,” etc. He would think about the qualities a finance firm is interested in (details orientated, numerically proficient, responsible), and he'd make sure he honestly described what he did in such a way that those qualities shone through. So, what qualities are important in your chosen industry? If what you did has nothing to do with the job, don't be ashamed of that. Just think about the basic qualities that correlate between the two and show those.

Here are some qualities you may want to think about: Dependable, Curious, Thorough, Trustworthy, Quantitative, Communicative, Articulate, Multi-tasker, Adaptable, Good with teams, Good with Computers, Motivated, Ethical, Organized, etc.

### 3. **Structure?**

The order of your resume should be: Your Name, Contact Info, Objective (optional), Education, Honors (if any), Experience, Additional Experience/Volunteer Experience (if any), Activities (if any), Skills. Once you're out of college and working for a while, you can move the Education section around, but not right now.

### 4. **Objective?**

People often argue about the necessity of an Objective section. My personal opinion is that the information that would go in an objective section is more appropriate to a cover letter, so most of the time it's not necessary. However, one time I think it's a really good idea to use an objective is when you have very little experience in the industry you'd like to jump into (so, for example, the coach in point #2). Another time I would be sure to use an objective is if you were applying to a very specific job within a particular industry. Either way, though, if you do decide to include an objective, don't give over-generalized statements like “To find an internship” as that will make recruiters roll their eyes. Instead, keep it to one sentence on Job Type, Industry, and/or Geography. For example: “Objective: Auditor Tax Position with a Public Accounting Firm in the New York City area.”

### 5. **Education?**

In general, your education section should look like some form of this:

**Education:**

**Fordham University**

Bronx, NY

Gabelli School of Business

Degree Expected May 2013

Bachelors of Science in **Business Administration**

Primary Concentration in **Information Systems**

Minor in **Economics**

Cumulative GPA: x.x

*If you have any questions, please contact your Junior Class Dean,  
Alan Cafferkey – [cafferkey@fordham.edu](mailto:cafferkey@fordham.edu)*

If you're an Accounting major, though, you'll need to add your expected graduate degree or show how you intend to reach the 150 credit hours CPA qualification (Please see the separate sheet on this at [www.fordham.edu/Gabelli/Juniors](http://www.fordham.edu/Gabelli/Juniors)).

#### 6. **GPA?**

Always include your cumulative GPA unless it's below a 3.0. The only exception to this is if you're an Accounting major, in which case you always have to give your cumulative GPA.

#### 7. **Major GPA?**

A major GPA is helpful to add to a resume, especially if your cumulative GPA is below 3.0. If you want to add in a major GPA, you would just calculate the average of your courses in your major beyond the business core. So, for example, an Accounting Major would average out his or her grades for all his or her Accounting courses (you may add in your core Accounting courses if you wish). Be aware, though: if your cumulative GPA is already pretty high, or if there's really very little difference between your Major GPA and your Cumulative GPA, then you probably don't need to show your Major GPA.

#### 8. **Don't over-specialize. Show that you're well-rounded.**

You're a college student. The firms know this. They don't expect you to be an expert. They do expect you to be well-rounded, though, so expand your focus beyond the classroom. Make sure you show active participation in either the Fordham community or the community at large.

#### 9. **Format of the Experience Section?**

The heading for each job should look like this:

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Company Name                                | City, State              |
| Your Job title (even if it's just "Intern") | Date Range of Employment |

You can use cells to make the information on the right align to the right.

#### 10. **Don't give full addresses or references unless asked**

If you feel the need to fill up space, then you can just write "References available upon request" at the bottom of your resume. However, it's already implied that you'd have references to provide if asked, so it's not really necessary.

#### 11. **Correct Tense**

If you're currently working there, then describe what you do in the present tense. If you no longer work there, describe what you did in the past tense.

*If you have any questions, please contact your Junior Class Dean,  
Alan Cafferkey – [cafferkey@fordham.edu](mailto:cafferkey@fordham.edu)*

**12. Always use the active voice. Never use the passive voice**

A good rule of thumb is to start each line of description off with a verb in the active voice (e.g. Collaborated..., Served..., Assisted..., etc.).

**13. Vary your words, especially verbs**

Many resumes have the same words pop up over and over again because the writer didn't read it over (or didn't feel like using a thesaurus). Vary your language as much as possible. Watch out especially for repeated use of words like "maintained," "created," "organized," etc. Also watch out for "I" constantly appearing.

**14. Use bullet points – Don't write paragraphs**

When you start describing jobs, just use bulletpoints. Each one should be a full and complete sentence even if you decide not to use periods. Don't just write a paragraph because the recruiter will glaze over at the prospect of having to read it and just toss it instead.

**15. Know when and when not to use industry buzz words**

Using language specific to a particular industry can make you seem like a member of that industry, however, that only helps you're using the lingo correctly. If you honestly couldn't define the term you're using, just omit it.

**16. Use bond/resume paper**

Make sure you use the proper bond or resume paper for your resume, and not just the regular copy paper from your printers. You can pick up a pack of bond paper at Staples. You can also go the JMH 3<sup>rd</sup> floor computer lab, and they'll print it out on bond paper for you. Also, if you submit a cover letter with your resume, I'd recommend that you use the same paper for both (although there's differing opinions on that).

If you'd like someone to review your resume before you send it off, feel free to stop by the Gabelli Dean's Office (Faber 359) or the Career Services Center (McGinley 224).

Good luck!

*If you have any questions, please contact your Junior Class Dean,  
Alan Cafferkey – cafferkey@fordham.edu*