

How to create a résumé that gets results

Resumé guide

What is a resumé?

A resumé is a marketing tool that effectively demonstrates your skills, abilities, experiences, and accomplishments to potential employers so they:

- want to meet you and discuss possible employment opportunities.
- understand the skills and competencies you have that match their available positions based on the experiences and accomplishments you list on your resumé.
- can assist you with your job search by forwarding your resumé to other departments within their organization or to colleagues if they think there is a better match (this is more common when you send in a resumé without applying for a specific job).

Before you begin creating your resumé

Identify your strengths

Reflect on your skills, values, interests, and attributes. What are you good at? What do you believe in? What motivates you? What qualities are you known for?

Before constructing your resumé, write down a few key points that will help you hone in on your unique traits. List five things that describe you for each of these categories:

- Skills and competencies (e.g., fluent in 3 languages, knowledge of Adobe Creative Suite, strong in applied math, good at teamwork, skilled in presentations, etc.)
- Values (i.e., what matters to you, such as personal efficiency, honesty, punctuality, social justice, ambitiousness, etc.)
- Interests (e.g., skiing, running, cooking, reading, etc.)
- Personality attributes (e.g., hard-working, friendly, outgoing, thoughtful, considerate, etc.)

Skills and competencies

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Values

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Interests

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Personal Attributes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The following list of professional skills may be useful to you throughout your academic education. You should seek to develop them throughout your time at Rotman Commerce.



What are the needs of the employers?

An effective resumé will gain the attention of employers by providing concrete examples of your skills and experience that relate to what they are looking for in a successful job candidate. The example below demonstrates how your skills and related experience can successfully meet employer needs.

<u>Employer requirements</u>	<u>Your skills</u>	<u>Your related experience</u>
Train volunteers	Training	Trained new cashiers at bookstore, trained other employees in opening and closing procedures
Analyze market conditions and possible trading trends in the Pacific Rim	Analyzing	Analyzed market trends to accurately forecast in April the price of gold (student project)

When you are applying for a particular job, read the job description carefully and note the competencies/skills that the employer is seeking. Then, assess your own competencies, identify examples in which you've demonstrated them, and include them in your resumé and cover letter. This will make it easier for the employer to determine whether you're qualified and should be called in for an interview.

Remember that your resumé is your own personal advertisement. It should embody your "personal brand" and be relevant to the type of work you are seeking. Bear in mind that employers will only spend between 20 and 60 seconds looking it over, so your main objective is to get their attention by demonstrating that you're a good match for the job or industry you're applying to.

Most standard business resúmes at the undergraduate level are one-page maximum, however, different industries may allow up to two pages. Do your homework and confirm the industry standard. If in doubt, check in with a Rotman Commerce Career Educator or Relationship Manager. Your resumé is an evolving document that will change over time and with each application. You should be updating your resumé on a regular basis, and reviewing it for each role you apply for.

Resumé format

It's also important that your resumé look professional. Here are some guidelines to help you with proper formatting.

Contact information

- Your name: font size should be 2 to 3 sizes larger than the rest of your resumé
- Phone number, email address, and LinkedIn profile URL: this section provides employers with current contact information. You should have a standard, professional-sounding email address (we recommend using your @mail.utoronto.ca account). Your mailing address is not necessary but you can include your city and country if you are applying for a position internationally. To get a LinkedIn profile URL that is clearly yours, follow these instructions:
 1. Click the "Me" icon at the top of your LinkedIn homepage.
 2. Click "View profile".
 3. Click "Edit public profile & URL" on the right rail.
 4. Under "Edit your custom URL" in the right column, click the "Edit" icon next to your public profile URL.
 5. The address will look like this: linkedin.com/in/yourname
 6. Type the last part of your new custom URL in the text box.
 7. Click SAVE.

Jill Smith

416-555-5555 | jill.smith@utoronto.ca | linkedin.com/in/jillsmith

Qualification highlights (optional)

This section is a 3 to 5 bullet point snapshot of your "unique value proposition." Highlight key skills that are relevant to the industry you are applying to. These skills can be based on a combination of your academics, work/volunteer experiences, skills, interests/extra- and co-curricular activities.

Qualifications

- Effective team leader and motivator as demonstrated through involvement in Debates Club and Team Captain of University of Toronto Varsity Football Team
- Great problem solver with well-honed presentation skills developed by participating in 10 case competitions across Canada and the US

Education

Below is an example of the standard format we recommend:

EDUCATION Rotman Commerce, University of Toronto Bachelor of Commerce, Specialist in Finance, Accounting, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dean's List Fall/Winter 20XX• CGPA 3.9 Relevant courses: RSM495H1 Management Consulting	Expected Graduation 20XX
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Include your GPA if you feel that it is a selling point.

Include your achievements (i.e., Dean's List, Awards, etc.).

Note: If you have space, include other education, certificates, exchange/study abroad programs, or diplomas. You can also include any professional designations you are in the process of completing such as CPA, CFA, or CSC. If you do, include both the acronym and the designation name in full to ensure it's picked up in keyword searches that employers use to scan resumés. You can also include relevant awards in this section, be sure to indicate the criteria for which they were received, e.g., academics.

EDUCATION Rotman Commerce, University of Toronto Bachelor of Commerce, Specialist in Finance, Accounting, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dean's List Fall/Winter 20XX• CGPA 3.9 Relevant courses: RSM495H1 Management Consulting	Expected Graduation 20XX
International Exchange Program, Harvard University Investment Management & Capital Markets Certificate	Summer 20XX
Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Candidate, Level 1	

Experience

For the 'Experience' sections on your resume, choose the section headings listed below that best describe your experiences. Keep in mind that as a student, you'll gain experience through a number of different types of activities. Make use of all of these to demonstrate your suitability for the position you are applying for. Be sure to use well-written accomplishment-based statements to describe your experience (see next section), rather than simply listing the tasks you completed.

Work or professional experience

Generally, this is your paid work experience. There may be some situations in which you have gained professional experience through a volunteer position with a recognized organization (e.g., organizing fundraising teams at a charity run). If it is not obvious, you should also include a brief description of the organization or department where you worked (e.g., Rotman Commerce, an undergraduate business program at the University of Toronto)

Leadership, volunteer, or extra-curricular experience

For many students, these categories may be where your best examples of skills development or experience can be showcased. Here's where you can include leadership involvement in student groups, intramurals, or professional associations as well as positions in other kinds of organizations and community service programs. In most cases, you can choose which of these headings (leadership, volunteer, or extra-curricular) represents your experience the best.

Relevant experience

If your work/professional experience or leadership/volunteer/extra-curricular experience doesn't effectively demonstrate a required skill, but you have experience that does in some other capacity, you can use the 'Relevant Experience' heading as your primary experience section. If you use this heading because your work experience doesn't relate directly to the position at hand, title your work experience as 'Additional Professional Experience'. Try to demonstrate experiences that may not appear to be directly relevant but are when properly described (e.g., strengthened interpersonal and communication skills by serving customers during the busy lunch-time shift at a fast-paced food court).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Name of Organization, Location (City, Country)

Job Title, Division

- If you worked part-time, indicate hours/week worked as this demonstrates time management skills
- Highlight your contributions, results and or accomplishments Month/Year to Month/Year
- Describe a new skill you learned or developed
- Focus on your strengths as they relate to the position, organization, or industry

Professional skills

- Share any other skills you've gained that could be viewed as an asset.
- List additional technical skills you have.
- Note any languages you know and your level of fluency, e.g., English (fluent), French (conversational).

Interests

If you're engaged or accomplished in a number of areas, you can add this section. Feel free to break these into two or more categories. State your interests outside of your academic and work experience in bullet form. To help identify these, ask yourself:

- If I had a week off school and/or work what would I spend my time doing?
- What do I look forward to doing in my spare time?
- What would a good friend say I enjoy doing?

After making a list of your answers, ask yourself: "Would I hire a candidate who lists this as an interest?"

- List activities that demonstrate the skills the employer is seeking (e.g., involvement in clubs, groups, associations)
- List awards received for academics, community service, or athletics
- List the name of the award, clarify the purpose and the basis of the recognition, and include a date

INTERESTS

- Sailing Instructor, Toronto Sailing Club 20XX-Present
- Grade 10 Piano, Royal Conservatory of Music 20XX
- Award Recipient, J.L MacDonal Best Young Writers Guild 20XX
- Avid traveler – been to France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Asia, Australia, Brazil
- Enjoy recreational hockey and downhill skiing

Writing effective accomplishment-based statements

When highlighting your work, leadership/volunteer/extra-curricular, or relevant experience(s), think about the following to find examples of how you can illustrate your skills with an accomplishment-based statement:

- Describe a situation in which you solved a problem.
- Give an example of something you built or created.
- Describe an instance in which you developed an idea, or identified a problem that had been previously overlooked.
- Did you suggest any new products or programs for your organization that were put into effect during or after your employment?
- How have you increased sales or reduced costs for an organization?
- List ways you saved money or time.
- Did you help establish any new goals or objectives for your organization?
- Did you do anything to make your role more efficient?
- Have you been involved in a team effort that produced a specific result?
- Have you completed on-the-job training programs? If yes, list them.
- Have you ever helped train a peer or colleague?
- What do you excel in? How do your skills elevate the team dynamic? Why is this an advantage?
- What has a previous boss praised you for doing well and is it relevant to the position for which you are applying?

Practice writing accomplishment-based statements using the chart below:

What did you do?	How did you do it?	Results
ex. Created database	ex. Used Excel	ex. Reduced turnaround time by 50%

Action verb list for resumés

The words you choose for your resumé convey a lot about you and your professional experience. Use action verbs to make your resumé more dynamic and engaging. Remember when you incorporate action verbs into your resumé, you need to make sure to use the correct tense (past or present).

Words that imply communication

attended
automated
collected
compiled
considered
contemplated
contracted

delivered
discharged
engaged
engineered
established
examined
expedited

founded
handled
implemented
increased
inventoried
maintained
monitored

moved
operated
packaged
participated
performed
processed
provided

received
recruited
reviewed
shipped
solicited
sorted
staffed

Words that imply leadership

administered
allocated
appointed
approved
assigned

authorized
awarded
conducted
controlled
delegated
designated

discharged
enforced
executed
governed
hired
led

managed
oversaw
presided
recommended
regulated
required

selected
settled
signed
specified
sponsored
supervised

Words that imply results

accomplished
accounted
achieved
advanced
altered
answered
attained

awarded
benefited
built
changed
combined
completed
constructed

dismantled
earned
eliminated
expanded
finished
generated
identified

improved
manufactured
marketed
obtained
predicted
prevented
produced

profited
reduced
repaired
solved
tested
upgraded

Words that imply organization

adapted
analyzed
budgeted
calculated
combined

composed
coordinated
created
fashioned
formulated

induced
inspected
instituted
insured
interviewed

planned
prepared
recorded
reported
scheduled
standardized

supplied
systematized
tailored
trained
utilized
verified

Resumé template

Follow the template below to create a standard resumé. Remember to include experience that is relevant to the role that you are applying for.

First Name, Last Name	
firstname.lastname@utoronto.ca 416-555-5555 linkedin.com/in/firstlastname	
QUALIFICATION HIGHLIGHTS:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skill or experience to highlight related to job• Skill or experience to highlight related to job• Skill or experience to highlight related to job	
<i>You can include a "Summary" section as another option</i>	
EDUCATION	
Bachelor of Commerce Candidate	Expected Graduation Date
Rotman Commerce, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON Your Specialist	
<i>Other options for heading: "Relevant Experience" OR "Work Experience" You can also include the job posting title in an additional section to complement your work experience. For example: "Relevant Business Analyst Experience"</i>	
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	
Job Title, Employer Name, City, Province or Country	Month Year – Month Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Performed research analysis of XXXX leading to \$XXX development of XXXX)• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Initiated a market segmentation study and presented findings to CEO; recommendations adopted)• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Collaborated with a team of # managers in the planning of XX which provided XX to consumers)	
Job Title, Employer Name, City, Province or Country	Month Year – Month Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Marketed XX product line through strategies such as X and X to increase distribution by XX)• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Communicated product features to influence customer purchasing; exceeded sales targets by %)• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Investigated competitor product and services to recommend strategic product pricing of XX)	
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE	
Position, Rotman Commerce Student Club Name, University of Toronto	Month Year – Month Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Lead a team of # executive members in planning and execution of student-run programs, such as XXX)• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available (e.g., Increased student participation by X%)	
Position, Rotman Commerce Student Club Name, University of Toronto	Month Year – Month Year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of role/accomplishment using action verbs and specific results if available	
PROFESSIONAL SKILLS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical – List technical skills here• Languages – Describe languages spoken and fluency here• Financial Modeling – Describe specific skills here	
<i>Choose which title is most appropriate for this section. Include Extracurricular as its own section if you:</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack work experience• Your extra-curricular activities display relevant skills (leadership, event planning)• The role/position is relevant to the job/industry for which you are applying	
EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND/OR INTERESTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interest or extracurricular activity• Interest or extracurricular activity	

Resumé sample

Jennifer Chen

416-223-1234 | jenniferbchen@mail.utoronto.ca | linkedin/in/jenniferbchen

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Commerce Candidate, Management Specialist
University of Toronto, Rotman Commerce
Environmental Economics Minor, CGPA 3.4/4.0
President's Entrance Scholarship; Dean's List 2018-19

Expected Graduation Date: 20XX

- Management Consulting (4th year course) – Recommended strategies to retain market share for a major Canadian parcel delivery firm in response to growing same-day delivery market; spearheaded primary research process to contact and interview client's regional and national competitors

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Customer Experience Consultant, Bell Canada, North York, ON

May 20XX - Jul 20XX

- Analyzed current Satellite TV hardware return logistics to determine ways of optimizing the process to improve the customer migration experience while generating net benefit of \$5.6 million over five years
- Interviewed departments involved in reverse logistics and successfully interpreted data to support recommendations
- Conducted audit and edit of all customer-facing communications to improve and ensure consistency of information
- Improved personal call centre metrics (sales revenue, average call time, resolution rate) by 23% in two weeks

Summer Analyst, Investor Economics, Toronto, ON

May 20XX - Aug 20XX

- Increased efficiency of monthly mutual fund database update used in the production of all product reports by 100% through building specialized Excel template
- Compiled and organized mutual fund and ETF data to streamline report research and writing process improving speed of report publication and consistency of data

EXTRA-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCE

Peer Advisor, Rotman Commerce Career Services, University of Toronto, ON

Aug 20XX - Present

- Analyzed current Satellite TV hardware return logistics to determine ways of optimizing the process to improve the customer migration experience while generating net benefit of \$5.6 million over five years
- Interviewed departments involved in reverse logistics and successfully interpreted data to support recommendations
- Conducted audit and edit of all customer facing communications to improve and ensure consistency of information
- Improved personal call centre metrics (sales revenue, average call time, resolution rate) by 23% in two weeks

Director of Corporate Relations, Rotman Commerce Marketing Association (RCMA) Toronto, ON

Mar 20XX - Apr 20XX

- Restructured sponsorship strategy while balancing partner feedback and the RCMA's needs to reach optimum partnerships opportunities – raising over \$13,000 in the first semester
- Established safe yet challenging space for committee to learn and take on leadership opportunities

Co-Director of Conference, Rotman Commerce Women in Business (RCWIB) Toronto, ON

Apr 20XX - Mar 20XX

- Led and collaborated with team of seven to plan one of Canada's largest student-run female leadership conferences
- Executed conference at the expected high standard of quality while reducing costs by \$2000
- Reorganized conference structure and activities based on survey results, leading to improved satisfaction feedback

INTERESTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 1st Place, Rotman Commerce Marketing Case Competition; competed against 15 teams from across Canada
- Top 3 – Rotman Commerce Pride Alliance & KPMG DiverCity Case Competition; created a 10-minute pitch to reimagine a generic cosmetic product
- Fluent in Cantonese; written and spoken
- Competitive runner, avid golfer, accomplished cook

Resumé tips

Customize

- Choose section headings that meet industry standards and best highlight your skills and experience.
- Tailor your resumé for each position. Show your interest by analyzing and addressing the employer's specific needs.
- Support relevant skills found in the job posting with examples of your related experiences and their outcomes.
- Focus on what you can contribute to the organization.

Format

- Begin each bullet point with an accomplishment-based statement.
- As much as possible, try to quantify or qualify your tasks and/or accomplishments.
- If any of your experiences are still occurring, make sure your bullet points begin with an action verb in the present tense. All previous experiences should begin with an action verb in the past tense.
- Each section should list your experiences in reverse chronological order.
- Ensure that your resumé is inviting and easy to read – not cramped or dense-looking, wide margins all around, consistent font, minimal bolding and underlining.
- Aim for a concise one-page resumé unless you know the employer is open to more.

Spelling and grammar

- Don't stand out for the wrong reasons - spelling, grammar, and punctuation count!
- When you include an acronym, spell it out the first time and put the shortened version in brackets following. From that point on, you can only include the acronym, e.g., Rotman Commerce Marketing Association (RCMA).
- Use action verbs to emphasize relevant skills demonstrated in your previous experiences.

Last but not least

- Make sure your contact information at the top is correct. You can create a masthead and use it for both your resumé and cover letter.
- Have someone review your resumé for any typos or grammatical errors you may have overlooked.
- Have you received feedback? Show your resumé to Career Peers and Career Educators at Career Services, as well as people you know with professional experience.
- Is your resumé inviting and can the reader quickly identify your unique skill sets relevant to the position?
- Update your resumé regularly to highlight recent skills developed through academics and/or your work/extra-curricular experience.
- Strengthen the impact of your application by looking for or creating opportunities to meet professionals that work in the field and/or organization and can vouch for you. This of course needs to happen well before a position is advertised. For more information on how to achieve this, we recommend you meet with a Career Educator.

Next steps

Rotman Commerce Career Services offers you many options to put the finishing touches on your cover letter. Visit the Portal for a list of upcoming career labs, Career Peer Corner hours, drop-in appointments, webinars, and career-related events available to you.

Career Peer Corner

Get help from senior students on your resumé and cover letters. These students have been trained on giving feedback and have successfully applied to organizations that have interviewed and hired them, so they have first-hand experience of what employers are looking for.

Career coaching videos

This series of brief videos introduces you to career tools that will help you put your best self forward to recruiters and other contacts as you embark on your career journey. These videos teach you the fundamentals of the career search such as resumé and cover letter writing, interviews, and informational interviews.

Visit the Rotman Commerce Portal > Career Services > Resources to watch these videos.

Drop-in hours

Rotman Commerce Career Educators hold drop-in hours every week throughout the year so you can get a quick review of your resumé and cover letter. Bring a copy of your resumé, cover letter, and the job posting so we can ensure that you are tailoring your application for the position. No appointments are necessary. First-come, first-served.

One-on-one coaching appointments

Once you've used the services above and have your best draft ready to go, schedule a coaching appointment with a Career Educator to review your resumé.

Appointment times are available through the Portal > Appointments:

Rotman Commerce Career Educators

Each of our Career Educators have specific areas in which they work and in which they have relevant industry knowledge. Visit the [Rotman Commerce website](#) site to learn about our team and their specialties.