Preparing your Professional Resume

The purpose of a resume is…

to highlight and summarize your professional experiences and accomplishments as they relate to the position at hand in order to help you get an interview. Unless your professional experience related to your policy interests is extensive, your resume text should be kept to one page. (Resumes for the Ford School resume books should ALL be one-page long.) Since one of the trickiest aspects of writing a resume is deciding how to use limited space to most strategically highlight what you have to offer your potential employer, this handout was designed to help you get started. In addition, individual resume consultations are available through the Ford School Office of Career Services.

Strong resumes:

- provide details that highlight the scope of your work.

- demonstrate a well thought-out, easy-to-read layout in which consistency is maintained throughout each section. Your formatting should become the background of your resume not the focus, making it easy for the employer to focus on your resume *content*. Steer away from using non-standard bullet points, shading, and other format techniques that can make a resume look "noisy."

- use headings that best allow your qualifications to shine through. (See "Other Sections" below for ideas.)

- make the most of limited space to highlight experiences that are most related to the professional goal at-hand. The typical employer spends less than one minute scanning a resume. Is that waitress job you did over the summers during college taking up as much space on your resume as your summer internship at the GAO? If so, consider mentioning it only briefly as a one-liner under "Other Experience," or even leaving it out.

- are error-free. Proofread your resume for errors, and then proofread it once again. Have your friends review it for errors, and don't rely on your computer's spell-check function or Career Services staff to catch errors.

Getting started

One of the most valuable things you can do before developing (or redeveloping) your resume is to research job descriptions and talk to potential employers and Career Services staff to learn what the employer is looking for. Brainstorm a list of your experiences that can be used to demonstrate that you have the skills and qualities desired by your future employer. Think outside the box (significant class projects, volunteer experience, leadership, paid work, prior internships). Use the language of your future employer as you present your experiences on your resume. Expand on experiences that highlight the types of skills that are desirable by employers in your field of interest. Keep your resume targeted, and employer-focused. Remember: the purpose of a resume is to help you get an interview, not to list everything you have ever done or won.

So…what do I include in my resume?

Heading

At the top of your resume, include your name and contact information. If relevant, include both current and permanent telephone and address information. Make sure that whatever number you list leads to a reliable message recorder—be it a roommate, voice mailbox, or family member.

A Word on Objectives

Objectives are optional, and for the resume book should be left out. If you do use an objective for other resume purposes, keep it short and employer-focused.

Education

List all your education in reverse chronological order, starting with your Ford School experience. See sample resume included in this document for formatting ideas. If you have limited policy experience, you may want to include academic honors, organizational affiliations, et cetera. Consider including relevant course work or a short description of the master's degree program, particularly if you are targeting employers who are not familiar with the Ford School or a MPP/MPA

Experience

Past and current experience should be listed within sections in reverse chronological order. Be strategic as you list your different positions so that your most relevant experience is not buried in the middle of less relevant professional experience. Consider using separate sections (e.g. Relevant/Related/Policy Experience, and then an experience section titled "Other Experience") so that all policy-related positions can be grouped together. Expand upon the experiences that are most relevant to your professional goals, and that highlight the types of skills you possess which are most important to your future employer.

Unless dates are the most marketable aspect of your experience, position the dates after the job title and name of organization. Include location (city, state) for each position.

Describe duties, activities and accomplishments of your positions using short one-liners that begin with an action verb (see attached list). Help the reader create a mental image of your skills, abilities, and achievements by providing information about the scope of your work and results you achieved. Whenever possible, identify your accomplishments in quantifiable terms. (E.g. "Presented 20 minute report of findings to senior administrative team. Recommendations integrated into citywide management plan.)

Other sections

Depending upon your experience and the type of employer you are targeting, other sections you may want to include are: *Leadership, Significant Academic Projects, Publications, Selected Presentations, Research Experience, Civic Activities, Professional Summary.*

References

Since it is a given that if asked you will provide references, it is not necessary to note "references available upon request" (or something similar) at the end of your resume. Prepare a one-page list of references to submit upon the recruiter's request. Provide name, title and contact information for each reference, and make sure you have contacted your references ahead of time to give them the "head's up" that they might be getting

calls about you sometime soon. (This also provides an excellent opportunity for you to update them on your recent experiences and professional goals.)

CV versus resume

As noted above, your resume is a one- or two-page document that highlights and summarizes professional experiences and accomplishments as they relate to the position at hand. A CV (or "curriculum vitae"), on the other hand, is often more than two pages long and is used to demonstrate expertise and authority. CVs are used more in scientific and academic settings in which it's necessary to provide detailed information about activities like teaching, research, publications, and presentations. Many people, however, use the terms CVand resume interchangeably. Generally, when recruiters say "send me your CV", they are looking for your resume. If in doubt, ask Career Services staff.

A few words on technology

For resumes that you plan to send out by email, many of the same resume-writing rules apply. Similar to the regular "snail mail" process, resumes sent out via email should never be sent out without a cover letter or letter of introduction. Since some companies' email applications and policies make it difficult to view attachments, you may want to develop a second resume specifically for email purposes. By using the following strategies, you can ensure that your resume looks the way you intend it to look when it appears upon your potential employer's computer.

- Create your resume in your favorite word-processing program avoiding any special formatting commands specific to your work-processing program. Use ** and – instead of bullets. Use only the keys on the main portion of your keyboard.
- Save your resume as an ASCII (plain) text file which you can then paste directly into the email. Because most email readers are set to 60-characters per line, you can avoid sloppy looking line breaks by limiting your lines to this length. Use hard carriage returns to insert line breaks. Avoid multi-column layouts.
- Send your resume via email to yourself in order to check the formatting.

Finally…

There is no one correct resume format. Take a look at the following resume samples to get ideas for your own resume. Come into the Career Services Resource Library (Annex 210) to review past years' resume books for additional ideas on wording, format, et cetera. Be sure to schedule some time to attend a resume-writing workshop and to meet with Career Services staff individually for a resume critique or consultation.

Action Verbs

accomplished	determined	increased	planned	sorted
achieved	developed	initiated	predicted	staffed
acquired	devised	inspected	prepared	standardized
adapted	diagnosed	instigated	prescribed	stimulated
addressed	directed	instituted	presented	streamlined
administered	disproved	instructed	processed	strengthened
advanced	distributed	interpreted	procured	succeeded
advised	documented	interviewed	produced	suggested
allocated	drew up	introduced	programmed	summarized
analyzed	earned	judged	projected	supervised
appraised	edited	launched	provided	supported
arranged	effected	lectured	publicized	surveyed
assessed	eliminated	led	published	synthesized
audited	enlisted	located	purchased	systematized
budgeted	established	maintained	questioned	tailored
built	estimated	managed	raised	targeted
calculated	evaluated	manipulated	rated	taught
coached	exceeded	marketed	recommended	tested
collaborated	executed	mediated	recorded	trained
collected	expanded	mentored	recruited	transferred
communicated	expedited	modeled	reduced	translated
compiled	explained	modified	reorganized	tutored
composed	facilitated	monitored	repaired	uncovered
conducted	figured	motivated	reported	updated
constructed	financed	negotiated	represented	upgraded
consulted	forecasted	observed	researched	utilized
coordinated	formulated	obtained	resolved	verified
counseled	fostered	ordered	responded	won
created	generated	organized	reviewed	wrote
decided	handled	outlined	revised	
decreased	headed	oversaw	rewrote	
delegated	identified	participated	scheduled	
delivered	illustrated	performed	set up	
demonstrated	implemented	persuaded	simplified	
designed	improved	piloted	solved	

SAMPLE RESUME 1 (FULL-TIME CANDIDATE)

John Benson

123 Main Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
home: 734-123-4567, cell: 734-765-4321
bensonjo@umich.edu

EDUCATION

University of Michigan, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy — Ann Arbor, MI
Master of Public Policy — Expected May 2000

Concentration: International Economic Policy. Coursework includes micro- and macro-economics, political strategy, cost-benefit analysis, and statistics. Recipient of the Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) Fellowship.

University of California, College of Letters and Science — Davis, CA
Bachelor of Arts in English — May 1997

Minor: Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Graduated Summa Cum Laude.

Universidad Iberoamericana — Mexico City, Mexico
Semester exchange participant — Fall 1995

Course work included economic theory, international affairs, advanced political systems theory, and Spanish literature. All classes taught in Spanish.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

University of Michigan — Ann Arbor, MI
Graduate Teaching Assistant: Political Science Department — 9/99-present

Instruct undergraduates in advanced level course on American politics. Lead two discussion sections per week. Grade papers and exams.

United States General Accounting Office — Washington, DC
Intern: Education, Workforce and Income Security Team — 5/99 - 8/99

Analyzed and researched employment-related issues. Prepared independent internal report analyzing employee coverage and exemptions under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Resulting document will be used by analysts within the Department of Labor to evaluate cost effectiveness of the FLSA.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Freelance Reporter, Summit Daily News, Silverthorne, CO (8/87-5/98)
Ski Instructor, Keystone Mountain Resort, Keystone, CO (11/97-3/98)

ACTIVITIES

President, Ford School International Policy Student Association, Ann Arbor, MI (9/99-5/00)
Conversation Partner, English Language Institute, Ann Arbor, MI (9/98-present)
Treasurer, Intercultural Exchange Program, Ann Arbor, MI (9/95-5/96)

OTHER

Fluent in Spanish (written, oral). Proficient in German (written).
Proficient in Lexis-Nexis, Stata, PageMaker, Front Page, and MS Office 2000 applications.

SAMPLE RESUME 2 (FULL-TIME CANDIDATE)

MOLLY J. FARNSWORTH

123 Packard Street #8 Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104 734-403-0201 mfarnswo@umich.edu

EDUCATION

University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy Master of Public Policy December 1999
School of Social Work Master of Social Work December 1999
Interdisciplinary dual-degree program focusing on social welfare policy analysis using quantitative and qualitative methods. Course work in microeconomics, macroeconomics, benefit-cost analysis, program evaluation, regression analysis, education policy, welfare policy, statistics, management of human service organizations, budgeting and fiscal management.

Loyola University Chicago, IL
Bachelor of Arts in Social Work, *cum laude* May 1997

POLICY EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant September 1999 – Present
University of Michigan Nonprofit and Public Management Center Ann Arbor, Michigan
Researched creation, development and evaluation of cross-sector partnerships. Organized and synthesized materials from Cross-Sector Partnerships conference. Prepared summaries and reports on articles pertaining to cross-sector partnerships and collaborations.

Research Assistant April 1998 – October 1998
The Collaboratory for Community Support Ann Arbor, Michigan
Independently developed method for profiling inputs and outputs of community service delivery systems. Successfully profiled homelessness services system in Toledo, Ohio. Report used to develop new, collaborative process for re-engineering the homeless services system. Provided research assistance and quantitative analysis to community problems including homelessness, emergency food provision, and community collaborations. Authored or co-authored analytical reports on social service systems and collaborations including: *Categories of Collaboration: Helping Greater Toledo Identify Best Practices for Community Focused Collaborations; Profile of the Current Toledo Homeless Services System;* and *Pilot Project: Emergency Food Assistance in Two Counties.*

Nonprofit Consulting Intern January 1998 – April 1999
Nonprofit Enterprise at Work Ann Arbor, Michigan
Provided nonprofit management consulting to social service providers and advocacy organizations including the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition and The Collaboratory for Community Support. Researched the development of an assistive technology loan program for Michigan. Conducted preliminary research developing method of profiling community social service delivery systems.

WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS

"Sexual Orientation: Tolerance vs. Acceptance in Human Service Organizations" Workshop presented at Camp Fire Boys and Girls National Youth Leadership Forum, July 1997, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"New National and Regional Youth Leadership Forum Structure" Presentation given at Camp Fire Boys and Girls National Congress, November 1996, Kansas City, Missouri.

RELEVANT VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Camp Fire Boys and Girls Director of the National Board 1995-1997
Member of Youth Advisory Cabinet 1995-1997

Heart of Illinois HIV/AIDS Clinic Volunteer Research Assistant 1995

SAMPLE RESUME 3 (INTERN CANDIDATE)

Stanley H. Grant

Permanent: 54321 River Road, Riverside, VT 20101; (531) 975-4321
Campus: 831 Church Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 123-4561
Email: grantsh@umich.edu

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN Ann Arbor, MI
Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, *Master of Public Policy* (Expected 5/00)
College of Letters, Science and Arts, *Bachelor of Arts in Political Science* (Expected 5/99)

Accelerated five-year AB/MPP program emphasizing both quantitative and qualitative elements in public policy development and analysis. Courses include: Public Management, Applied Microeconomics, Benefit-Cost Analysis, Political Environment of Policy Analysis, Financial Management, Intergovernmental Relations in Environmental Policy, Politics of Natural Resources, and Bureaucracy and Policy Making. *Recipient of H. Stanford Freshman Prize for Academic Excellence.*

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

MICHIGAN STUDENT ASSEMBLY, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Elected Representative (Fall 1998-present)

- Participated in the Budget Priorities Committee as a member of the Assembly.
- Reviewed student group funding requests and made recommendations to the Assembly.
- Represented Rackham Graduate School to campus-wide government.

COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE & ARTS STUDENT GOVERNMENT, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Budget Committee Chair (8/97 – 5/98)

- Organized student groups' funding requests, and trained organization treasurers on proper accounting and request procudures
- Allocated funds from government budget to over 300 student organizations.

CONGRESSWOMAN SARAH H. JOHNSON'S OFFICE, Washington, DC
Intern (Summer 1997)

- Attended committee hearings and drafted memoranda for legislative aides.
- Assisted constituents with their requests for tours and appointments.
- Responded to constituent mail, and organized office records.

COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE & ARTS STUDENT GOVERNMENT, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Treasurer (8/96 – 5/97)

- Organized budget records and reimbursed student groups through campus bank.
- Implemented new financial recording system using Student Accounts Transaction software.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Undergraduate Political Science Association (University of Michigan)
- Net Impact (a network of emerging business leaders committed to using the power of business to create a better world)
- Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management