



Ministry Resumé Writing Guide

YOUR RESUMÉ

Your resumé provides prospective employers with their first impression of you—it is your chief marketing tool. It helps prospective employers evaluate your skills, accomplishments, and educational background to see if they would like to interview you.

If you have several career interests and you are applying for several positions that are unrelated, you may want to develop multiple resumé with different objectives. The following pages will define different features to help you develop your own unique resumé.

Talk with the Advisor for Vocation & Career Development: Visit the Southern Seminary & Boyce College Office of Career Development in Williams Hall, Room 112 or email careerdevelopment@sbts.edu to make an appointment for resume review.

ESSENTIAL RESUMÉ CONTENT

Your resumé is unique to you and it is a critical marketing tool; it should be individually tailored for each application. You may want to create a “master” resumé with all of your activities and experiences that can be rearranged or modified for particular jobs. Remember: your resumé needs to show how YOU meet THEIR needs. **Consider using the RAT concept (Results, Accomplishments, Time) and not just your required duties.**

Prior to creating your resumé, make a list of your various experiences (work, internship, volunteer, etc.). Then, using that list, ask yourself how have you:

- Solved any problems?
- Demonstrated leadership?
- Motivated others?
- Created something new?
- Acquired industry knowledge?
- Created new systems or procedures?
- Made a process more efficient?
- Made a process cheaper?
- Improved a system?
- Successfully fulfilled your duties/responsibilities?
- Increased membership or participation?
- Accomplished a goal?
- Gone above and beyond your duties?
- Used computer/ technical skills?
- Planned an event?
- Trained another individual?

NOTE: Although there may be resumé templates online, you can access our **recommended resume templates** [here](#).

*****The section headings that follow should always be present on your resumé.**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Your name, mailing address, cell number, and email address should always top your resumé. Use your permanent or college address depending on the proximity of your desired location. You may include a link to a professional blog or LinkedIn profile. This section should align with your cover letter (every resumé for a posted position needs a cover letter, but they are not necessary for career fairs/hiring events).

NOTE: Make sure that your email address and voicemail are professional.

SUMMARY (OR OBJECTIVE) STATEMENT

While optional, a summary (or objective) statement sets a positive tone and informs the employer of the position you are seeking and what strengths/skills you bring. It is especially beneficial when networking or attending networking events because it gives some background on your skills, strengths, and interests. Be brief and consider job title(s), what you can offer the employer, a description of potential career paths in a particular field, or your short-term goals.

Examples: Dean's List M.Div. student—with significant pastoral, leadership, and teach experiences—seeks full-time pastoral opportunity.

Master's student—possessing a diverse background in counseling, children's/youth ministry, and local church leadership—seeks full-time vocational ministry role.

EDUCATION

Include all colleges and universities from which you have earned a degree/certificate and list in reverse chronological order (your most recent school listed first). You may want to include your cumulative GPA and/or your major GPA, if one or both are above a 3.0.

- If you've earned Dean's List, scholarships, or are academically distinguished, make sure you include this distinction with your degree information.
- You can also include study abroad information here.

Examples: **The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary**, Louisville, KY Expected May 2023
Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Great Commission Studies
Dean's List (4), Cumulative GPA: 3.2

Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom Summer 2022
Research in Church History

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Summarize your ministry experiences by highlighting those that best reveal your skills and abilities.

Examples: **Pastoral Intern**, June 2020 - Present
Mill Run Baptist Church, Louisville, KY

Minister of Music & Students, May 2019 - May 2020
Third Baptist Church, Knoxville, TN

You can include paid work experiences, volunteer work, and internships. You *do not* have to mention all of your ministry experiences; include those most relevant to the position.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Summarize your experiences by highlighting those that best reveal your skills and abilities in relation to the type of job you are seeking.

*Example: **Shift Manager**, Summer 2018
Chick-fil-A, New York, NY*

You can include paid work experiences, volunteer work, and internships. You do not have to mention all of your professional experiences; include those most relevant to the position. If you have several experiences that are directly related to the type of job you are seeking, you may list them under a separate category called “Related Experiences.”

SKILLS

Information about special skills that are relevant to your job objective can enhance your resumé, such as computer skills, language skills, research skills, leadership skills, and technical skills. You can include this information as a separate category or as part of other entries on your resumé.

- To express your skill level, phrases like “expert in/master in,” “proficient in,” and “experience with” can be helpful.

*Examples: **Computer Skills:** proficient in Google Workspace
Bilingual: Spanish & English (Fluent)*

OPTIONAL RESUMÉ CONTENT

*****The section headings that follow should be on your resumé *only* if they reflect your experience(s) and fit the position(s) you are seeking.**

RELATED COURSEWORK

You may want to list appropriate college coursework in your resumé if you apply for a position that is unrelated to your major, OR if the coursework is unique/specialized in the career field.

HONORS/AWARDS

This is an optional section that will typically be the last section of your resumé. Entries in this category should include the name of the honor, the organization providing the honor, and the date when the honor was conferred.

*Example: **Honors Scholar**, The Augustine Honors Collegium, Fall 2021 – Present
Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts of America, December 2009*

VOLUNTEER WORK (OR COMMUNITY SERVICE)

Consider any volunteer experiences you’ve had while enrolled at Boyce or Southern (i.e. Habitat for Humanity, 1937 Project, etc.). “Volunteer Work” should be used as a heading when the volunteering relates closely to your career goal. If your volunteering is not related to your career goal, consider using “Community Service” as a functional heading.

*Example: **Crisis Volunteer** | Scarlet Hope Ministry | Fall 2020 – Present*

WRITING EFFECTIVE RESUMÉ BULLETS

Effective resumés translate work experience and college activities into language that employers will value and understand. Bullets are short, fragmented sentences that highlight transferrable skills used in your experiences and activities. A paragraph format may allow for more text on the page but can make the resumé seem dense and more difficult to read.

Below are critical considerations when writing effective bullets:

1. Emphasize skills, accomplishments, and leadership over duties; you want to focus on how you went “above and beyond” your responsibilities.
2. State all information positively and relate your skills and background to the position/industry.
3. Each of your bullets should begin with a properly conjugated action verb and they should end with an outcome (**view action verbs [here](#)**). No “I”, “me,” or “my.”
4. Bullet points should be organized for the needs of each position you apply to; put the most relevant bullet points at the top.
5. When possible, include quantities by number, duration, or dollar amount, and scope of your experiences to strengthen the impact of your message (e.g.: “supervised 12 employees,” “managed a \$2,000 budget”).
6. Be consistent with font type and size
 - a. **Font:** Use standard, readable fonts like: Arial, Tahoma, Calibri, Trebuchet, or Times New Roman.
 - b. **Size:** The font size for your bullets should be the same size as the rest of your headings except for your name. Your name should be around 14-point font; the rest of your content should be no smaller than 10-point font.

Example: Minister of Students and Outreach, Lou Baptist Church, Louisville, KY–Jan to Dec 2022

- Organized and implemented ministries to 25-30 students in grades 7-12, including Bible studies, fellowships, and recreational activities
- Served on Southern Baptist Convention’s 2001 Youth Evangelism Board
- Regularly participated in elder board meetings to set/implement strategic vision

SHOULD YOU INCLUDE A PHOTO ON YOUR RESUMÉ?

It depends. The industry standard for resumés is text only. However, some churches may expect to see a photo information. You cannot go wrong if you ask the search committee/interviewer what they would prefer.

SHOULD YOU INCLUDE A PERSONAL TESTIMONY, SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE, PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY, ETC. ON MY RESUMÉ?

No. Your resumés should only include the information mentioned thus far in this guide. A Personal Testimony, Spiritual Pilgrimage, Philosophy of Ministry, and the like should only be included in your application materials if it is requested by the search committee/interviewer. These should also be separate documents included alongside your resumé and cover letter.

SHOULD YOU INCLUDE FAMILY INFORMATION ON YOUR RESUMÉ?

It depends. The industry standard for resumes is no. *Your* resume is about *you*. However, some churches may expect this information. Like the photo decision, you cannot go wrong if you ask the search committee/interviewer what they would prefer.

SHOULD YOU INCLUDE REFERENCES ON YOUR RESUMÉ?

No. Your references should be a separate document included alongside your resume. You can view the Professional References Guide [here](#).

GENERAL RESUMÉ WRITING GUIDANCE

- Be brief; a one-page resum  for most college and seminary graduates is adequate. **Employers spend seconds reviewing a resum **, so you will want your resum  to be concise and focus on the most important points. *Federal, teaching, and academic resum s (CVs) can – and likely, will be – be longer.*
- Margins should not be smaller than 0.5 inches on all sides.
- Use action verbs to describe your accomplishments and avoid personal pronouns (**view action verbs [here](#)**).
- Be consistent with format, type style, and type size.
- Be consistent with verb tense and proofread for misspelled words and grammatical errors (have at least two others review your resum ).
- Use capital letters, bold print, or italics sparingly to highlight parts of your resum .
- Make sure to follow any instructions set by the employer for resum  submission.
- During the editing process, repeatedly save your resum  as a Word document to prevent file loss.
- Only send PDF versions of your resum  to prospective employers.
- Use a consistent file naming system to help you keep track of your resum s.
 - *Example:* Resume_JohnKing_10.6.19
- Bring hard copies of your resum  to job fairs and interviews, but do not fold or staple them.
- Use language that those unfamiliar with Boyce College/Southern Seminary and Christianity will understand.

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SUMMARY

Master's student—possessing a diverse background in counseling, children's/youth ministry, and local church leadership—seeks full-time vocational ministry role.

SKILLS

Spanish (Intermediate)
Expositional Teaching

Leadership
Team Building

Social Media Management
Oral/Written Communication

EDUCATION

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY
Master of Divinity (M.Div.), Great Commission Studies, May 2023
Dean's List (4); Cumulative GPA: 3.7

Boyce College, Louisville, KY
Bachelor of Arts, Humanities, May 2021
Minor: Business Administration; Emphasis: History
Dean's List (2); Cumulative GPA: 3

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Care of Souls in the Congregation
Dynamics of Organizational Leadership

Christian Teaching
Practical Theology in Context

MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Youth Minister, October 2019 - Present
Mill Run Baptist Church, Louisville, KY

- Direct adult and youth choirs and instrumental ensemble in a church of 150 members
- Teach youth Bible study, lead youth retreats and activities for a group of 72 students, ages 12-18
- Assist pastor in worship planning, visitation, and preaching in pastor's absence

Minister of Music & Students, May 2016 - September 2019
Third Baptist Church, Richmond, VA

- Assisted financial advisors in Merrill's Global Private Client Division
- Guided \$1,000,000 in assets by placing calls on behalf of intern team
- Researched investment philosophies and portrayed findings in a presentation
- Analyzed extensive data on prospective clients

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Shift Manager, October 2019 - March 2020
Chick-fil-A, Louisville, KY

- Manage a \$310,000 of monthly franchise revenue
- Analyze, report, and recommend stock investments to the group
- Facilitate recruitment events and conducted new-hire interviews

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

Crisis Response Coordinator, August 2021-Present
Kentucky Baptist Convention Disaster Relief

- Coordinate state-wide and interstate disaster relief efforts during 4 natural disasters impacting 15,000+ individuals

Body = 11pt Tahoma font | **Name** = 15pt Tahoma font | **Margins** = "Narrow" (.5 inches)

The top half of the resumé demonstrates the candidate's potential to be successful in an entry-level finance position. The bottom half of the resumé adds additional information that tells the story of the candidate's experiences.