



# REID'S BEST TIPS ON RESUMES



# RESUME

Your resume isn't always the first impression you'll make with an employer, but it may be your last. Your resume should be focused on the **impact** you have had on previous organizations you have worked for. If your only job has been working as a busser at a local restaurant, focus on what impact your role had on the company: "Maintained order and streamlined dish-washing processes to **reduce turnover time by 10%**." Even if these impact-producing numbers on your resume are estimates, ensure that they're accurate and realistic.

When designing your resume, we recommend that you follow the Marriott School of Management resume template. This template can be found at [iscareers.byu.edu](http://iscareers.byu.edu), on the "Resources" page under the "Resume" tile. A sample resume is also available.



You should have already submitted a resume with your application to the IS program. Reid and his team will be reviewing these resumes and providing feedback to you about improvements you can make. When you would like to get additional feedback on your resume, you can submit it to VMock.

Using AI, VMock has built a platform that will allow you to upload your resume and then receive specific feedback on how to improve it. You can also add members of Reid's team as career coaches, who can give you feedback on VMock, allowing you to make all your edits in one place.

VMock is a good tool to check your formatting, action verbs, and how well you quantify your impact in each of the experiences you list, but it is not all-inclusive feedback. You will need to put in additional thought and effort to polish your resume, even if you reach the "green zone" on VMock. Be sure to make all necessary changes between submissions as you only have 10 submission opportunities per year. If, for any reason, you run out of submissions, please email [iscareerservices@gmail.com](mailto:iscareerservices@gmail.com) and we will work with you.

# RESUME



[VMock](#) will be our primary way of giving you feedback on your resumes, and helping you in your preparation for recruiting season. [Click here](#) for a series of video tutorials on how to use VMock and receive feedback from your career coaches.

Next is a list of common improvements to keep in mind as you're updating your resume ("Reid's Tips on Resumes").

When Reid reviews your resume, he may write a number that corresponds to an improvement/tip you can find on this list. We recommend that you print out the following pages and use them as a checklist guide for updating your resume.



**vmock**



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## GENERAL GUIDELINES

**1) Length** – one-page max, three sections: Education, Experience, and Skills & Achievements.

**2) Consistent format** – Use a streamlined, easy-to-follow format. We recommend using the Marriott School IS template found below. The easiest way to implement it is to create a table in Word. If you need help formatting, please come see any member of the IS Careers team.



**3) Correct Grammar & Spelling** – Turn on a spell checker. One misspelled word is all it takes to have your resume set aside! Check for verb-tense consistency, especially with 'led' and 'lead.'

## HEADER

**4) Objectives & Summaries** – Remove the "Objectives" and "Summary" sections from this resume. "Objectives" section's material should be in your cover letter. "Summary" information should be posted on your LinkedIn profile. For more on this, see the "LinkedIn" section. Also, Remove the phrase "References available upon request" – This is no longer used on resumes. Employers understand that if asked, you can provide a separate page of references. Thus, prepare a separate page to take with you to an interview and provide it only if you're asked for it.

**5) Contact Information** – Place only one line with contact information under your name. Remove contact labels – a phone number is recognized as a phone number, and an email address is recognized as an email address without you putting labels on them. You only need to provide one phone number—the one you want potential employers to call.



TIPS

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## SECTION 1: EDUCATION

**6) *Marriott School*** – Marriott is spelled with two r's and two t's. Don't mess this up!

**7) *Degree Title*** – “Bachelor of Science Information Systems” or “BS Information Systems”. Don't mention Master of Information Systems Management unless you're already in the program. Even if you plan to go into the MISM, you aren't there yet (When you're accepted into the MISM, remove BSIS and only list the Master of Information Systems Management degree).

**8) *Remove High School*** - Your diploma got you into college, you don't need it on this resume (You're allowed an optional bullet under Skills and Achievements for High School accomplishments).

**9) *Transfer Student*** – If you came from another college and did not receive an Associate Degree there, then list the following (e.g.): “Transfer Student – General Studies and Music” under the name of the transfer college or university.

**10) *Graduation Date*** – Only list the future month and year when you'll receive your BSIS degree (until you're accepted as an MISM student if you're pursuing that degree).



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**11) GPAs** – Yes, put it on this resume. All of the IS employers will review your resume to see if you have the qualifying GPA (most employers have a minimum qualifying GPA of 3.00). Use three digits when reflecting GPAs (3.40 or 3.56). You're in a technical major, so your GPA tends to be lower than some of the non-technical business degrees. Once you have completed your first semester in the core, you have the option of listing your major GPA as follows: "Major GPA x.xx."

**12) Specialized Courses** – This title is preferred over "Relevant Coursework." If you choose to list Specialized Courses, only list the course titles, not the course numbers. Employers want to know the name/subject area of the course you took (e.g. "Specialized Courses: Java, Accounting, and VBA"). Specialized courses may include courses both outside the IS curriculum and IS elective courses that are appropriate for the job you're applying for.

**13) Associations/Clubs** – write: "Member – Association for Information Systems and (any other relevant clubs)"

## SECTION 2: EXPERIENCE

**14) Only ONE statement per bullet** – Don't put a period(.) in the middle of your bullet and start a new sentence/thought. Bullets can contain commas, semi-colons, dashes, and conjunctions ('and,' etc.), but no periods. Most bullet statements should be no more than two lines.

**15) Present Tense Action Verbs** – These verbs should be found only in jobs that you're presently doing. Keep in mind that it's possible to have completed something in your present job. Thus, only in your present job can you have both present tense and past tense action verbs. [Here is a list](#) of good action verbs.

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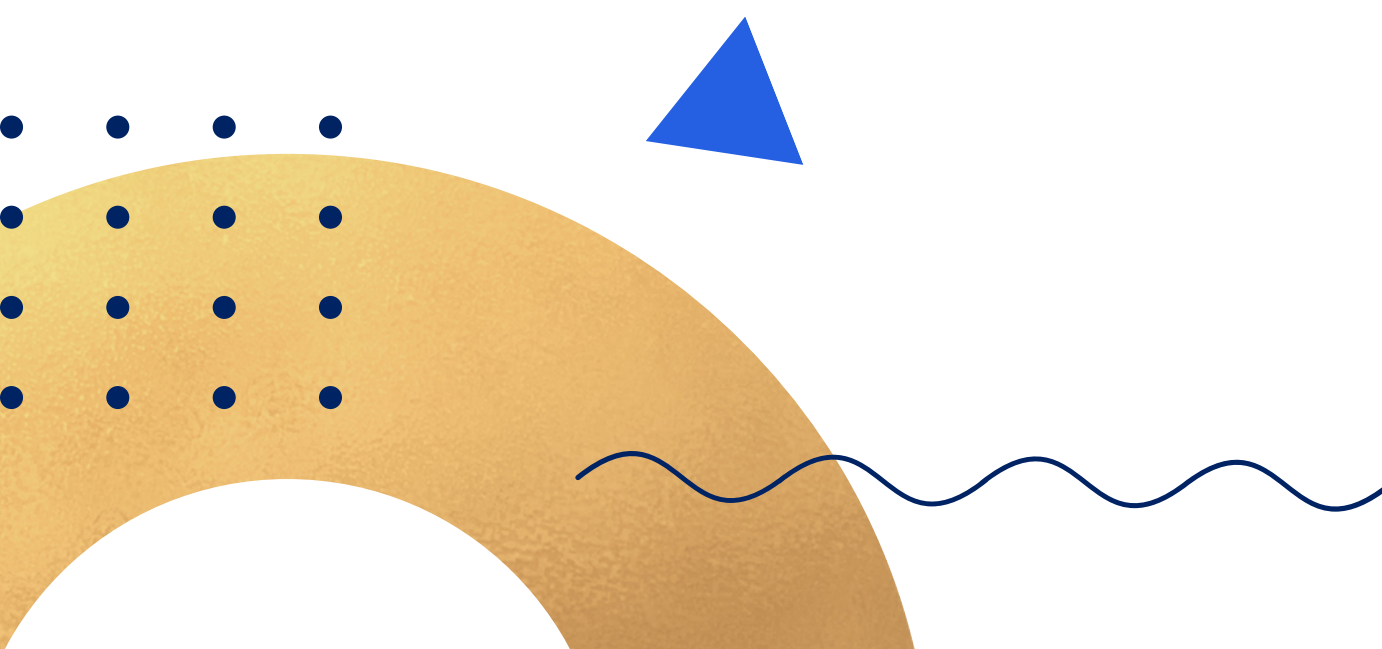
**16) "Purpose to be accomplished" bullets** – If you haven't completed the project or goal you were hired to do and/or that project has not been launched yet, write your bullet using: 'anticipated to...', 'expected to...', or 'projected to...' statements, placing the project or goal after the word 'to'. (e.g. "Key member of 12-person team developing a revenue solution that's anticipated to increase profits by more than 50%.)

**17) Locations** – Yes, include locations of where you work/worked. This means city and state or country. Put the location information next to the name of the employer/business. Don't include full street addresses or zip codes.

**18) Replace the words 'learned' or 'gained' with 'applied' or 'used'** – You're expected to learn or gain skills in a job or on a mission and then apply or use them, so showcase your application of the skills you have learned or gained.

**19) Don't use 'I' or other personal pronouns (me, my, they, their, our, etc.)** – This is a bullet-statement resume. All bullets start with action verbs, and the subject 'I' isn't placed in front of these action verbs. You shouldn't be writing paragraphs that narrate what you have done. Storytelling has its place during the interview.

**20) Remove weaker action verbs** – Readers of your resume need to know the specifics of your work. Using the verbs 'helped' or 'assisted' don't communicate what you personally did to make an impact. Whenever you want to use 'help' or 'assist' think about what you really did and use a stronger action verb to describe it.



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**21) Missions** – Yes, put your mission on this resume. Use the title ‘Volunteer Representative’ instead of ‘Missionary.’ Prepare three bullets: The first two bullets focus on leadership, training, teaching, motivating, organizing, and setting and achieving goals. The last bullet is for humanitarian service (e.g. “Performed community service every week including hospital visits, soup kitchen help, painting schools, etc.”) Here are some more [tips on the mission](#) section of your resume.

**22) Non-IS?** - What should you focus on in your non-IS-related “Experience” bullets? Let your experience focus on and show soft skills such as leadership, teamwork, outward achievement, and customer service (see “Infusing Soft Skills” section, pg. 21).

**23) Good Better Best/So What? Tips** – Rewrite your bullets to impress employers with what you have accomplished. How you performed is more important than a list of responsibilities you were hired to perform. See the “Good, Better, & Best Resumes” section below for help with making your bullets stronger.

## SECTION 3: SKILLS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

**24) Skills** – We are in a technical major and need to reflect our technical skills In two bullet points. List **proficient** (highly capable) and experienced (exposed to/familiar) technical skills. **No soft skills here.** (e.g. “Proficient in Java, Python” and “Experienced with C++, HTML”). When listing your skills, keep this in mind- Proficient means that you’re highly capable. This doesn’t mean perfection, but it does mean you won’t be relying on Google for advice very often. Experienced, on the other hand, means that you have used it in the past and are capable of using it again, although possibly needing help.

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**25) Volunteer Work** – Includes clubs/organizations

**26) One High School Bullet** – Optional

**27) Foreign Language Skills** – When describing your foreign language skills, you can be a “Native,” “Fluent,” or “Conversational” speaker. (e.g. Native Korean Speaker, Fluent Japanese Speaker, and Conversational Spanish Speaker). Unless you’re a translator, listing English on this resume isn’t necessary. Normally, missionaries are considered “Fluent” up to two years after completing their missions. Remove the words “Read,” “Write,” and “Speak” when referring to foreign languages; only use “Native,” “Fluent,” or “Conversational.”

**28) Interests** – Employers enjoy having the opportunity to get to know your personality, so tell them a few brief, unique things you enjoy doing in your free time. “Enjoy mountain biking, snowboarding, video editing, and gardening.” This is a great opportunity to have a personal connection with the interviewer and be a memorable candidate afterward.

**29) Eagle Scout** – Last line in this section.

# GOOD, BETTER, AND BEST RESUMES



**Good Resumes** present job-description bullets that focus on expressing the list of tasks you were hired to do.

**Better Resumes** present results bullets that focus on expressing measured changes that came because of your work. These bullets show the difference you made in your role. Normally, these bullets will show #'s, %'s, and \$'s. These bullets are better than job-description bullets because an employer can make a value statement/judgment about your performance based on the numbers you provide. You can make estimates to express these changes.

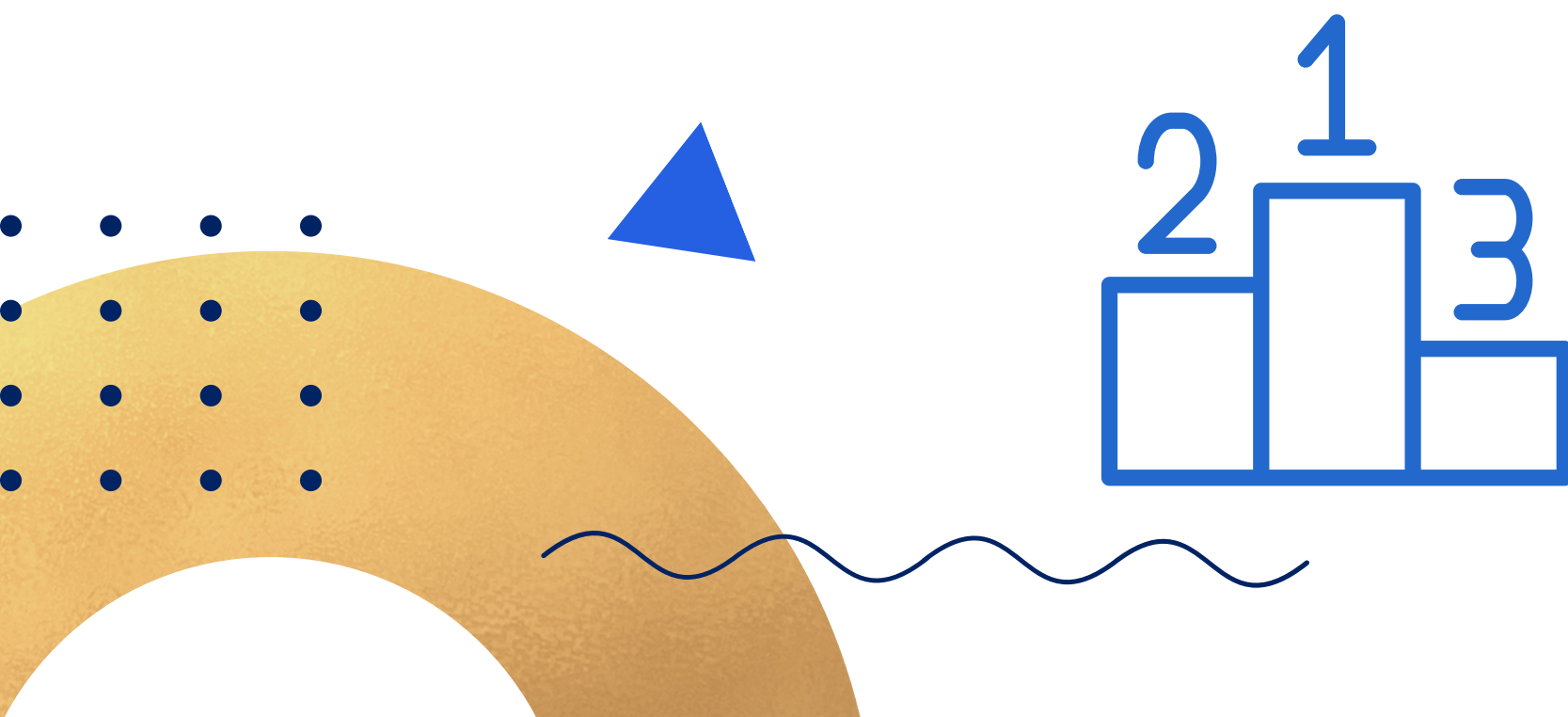
**Best Resumes** reflect results and **impact on customers/others**. They show how others feel about/were affected by your performance. These bullets focus on **impact** by expressing **'benefits delivered/received'** and/or their effect on people. (You may not always be able to add impact to a better bullet due to lack of space, but when you can, recruiters will sense your value, appreciate the difference you made in that job, and know-how you're the type of employee who is fully invested in your work.)

Examples:

**Good** - Compiled data into a functional format for the billing department

**Better**- Overhauled the billing department's data reports allowing compilation of over 6,000 daily transactions and achieving recognition for the fewest errors

**Best** - Created billing department's key reports program that accurately compiled over 6,000 daily transactions, reduced errors by 12%, and saved clients over \$600K in quarterly costs



# GOOD, BETTER, AND BEST RESUMES

*Infuse “soft skills”* (leadership, teamwork, outward achievement, and customer service) into bullets:

- Led a team of 12 to...
- Key member of a team tasked with ...
- Applied problem-solving techniques to...
- Presented reports used by key management that ...
- Recognized for achievement in...



# STRENGTHEN YOUR BULLETS



Use the word 'that' to resolve the question of "so what?" Why should I care? What has changed since you took over the job? What difference did you make?

Read every bullet you have written and ask, "so what?" because everyone who reads your bullets is asking that question. Think about what you want potential employers to know/perceive about you. Will this bullet tell them what you did and how it matters?

## **Process:**

**1)** Place the word **'that'** at the end of your bullet and then write the phrase which answers the "so what?" question. Normally, the first word after the word 'that' is the 'change verb' that describes what changed because of the task you completed (e.g. "increased," "improved," "ensured," "saved," "created," etc.).

**2)** After writing the phrase following **'that'**, remove the word 'that' and rewrite the bullet. Doing this will strengthen the bullet, but the bullet will need to be refined.

**3)** Yes, you can have bullets with the word 'that' in them, but not every bullet can. As you rewrite these bullets, try to restrict yourself to having only one **'that'**, only one **'which'**, and a few verbs with **'ing'** endings.

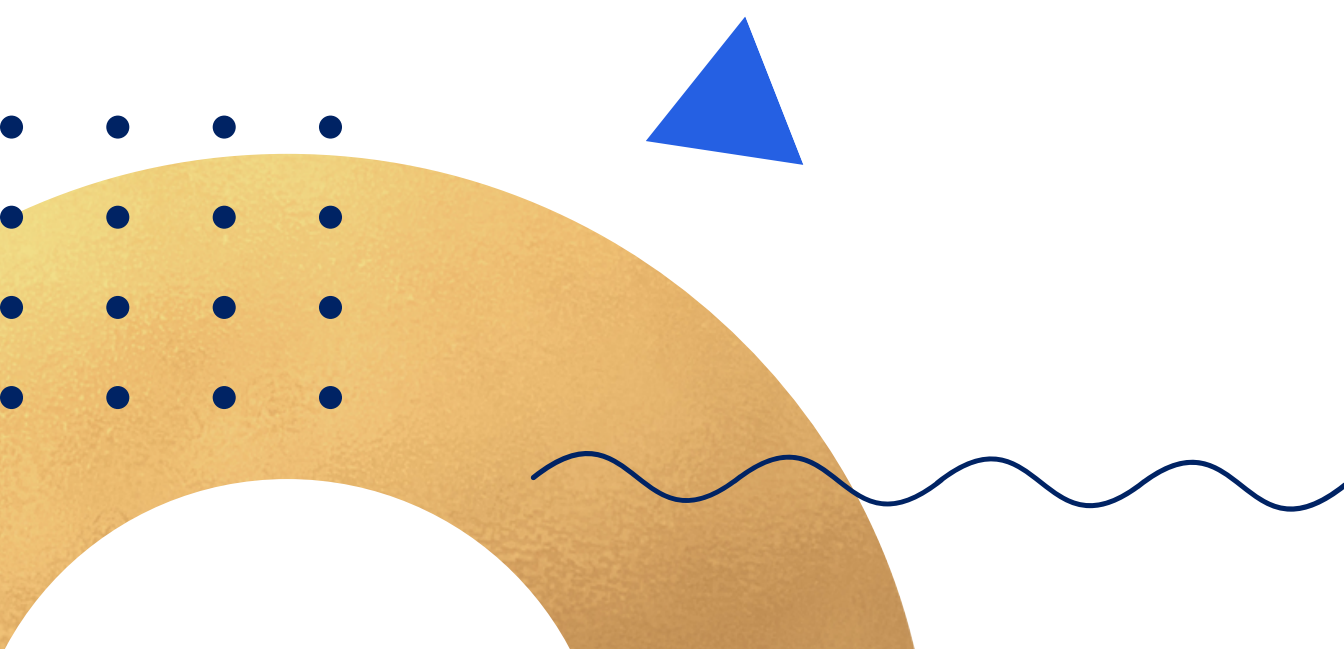
## **Tips:**

**1)** Bullet points should be no more than two lines.

**2)** Reid's analogy – Don't just dig holes in sandboxes, build sand castles.

**3)** Impressive resumes showcase results and impact on customers. What has changed since you took over the position? What benefits do others receive from your results?

**4)** Make a difference.



# STRENGTHEN YOUR BULLETS



## *Examples:*

- Orchestrated a weekly specialized notification program to 400 IS students with information relating to job and internship opportunities, that increased awareness of the IS program
- Developed a dynamic management report with Excel Pivot Tables used in detailed quarterly government compliance reporting, which improved accuracy and efficiency by 60%
- Created a comprehensive SAP dashboard Business Objects support team to prevent and diagnose outages, decreasing incident response time by 10%

