

Adapting Your Resume for a Nonprofit Job Search

If you are a prospective bridger—someone with experience primarily in business who is seeking a senior position in the nonprofit sector—you'll want to take a hard look at your resume and consider adapting it for a nonprofit job search. It is to your advantage to make your resume clear, easy to follow, and relevant to the nonprofit sector and the function(s) on which you are focusing your search. There is no single correct way to write or format a resume for the nonprofit sector, but the following tips, questions, and examples can help you create one that is both true to your experience and accessible and appealing to hiring managers at nonprofit organizations.

Resume content

The keys to adapting a primarily for-profit resume for a nonprofit job search are emphasizing transferable skills, highlighting nonprofit experience, and making the content relevant to a nonprofit hiring manager. As you review your resume, ask yourself the following questions:

Have I articulated my experience clearly and emphasized the transferability of my skills from the for-profit sector to the nonprofit sector?

Have I described fully and prominently all of my experience in the nonprofit sector, including any I may have gained as a volunteer, board member, or committee member?

Have I included descriptions of the companies I have worked for if their names might be unfamiliar to someone outside my field?

Have I removed jargon that may only be understandable or relevant to someone in my previous field?

Resume format

While the following simple formatting tips are relevant to preparing your resume for a job search in any sector, they too often are overlooked. Hiring managers are more likely to find your resume easy to read and understand if you:

Use a limited number of type styles to provide emphasis and guide the reader through your resume, but be consistent in how you use them. For example, you may want to use bold and italics to set off company and organization names, job titles, and/or dates.

Boston

535 Boylston St., 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02116
P 617 572-2833
F 617 572-2834

New York

112 West 34th St., Suite 1510
New York, NY 10120
P 646 562-8900
F 646 562-8901

San Francisco

465 California St., 11th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104
P 415 627-1100
F 415 627-4575

Be consistent throughout your resume with verb tense; margins and indentation; the shape, size and positioning of bullets; and capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviations.

Put your contact information (including email address and work, home, and/or mobile phone numbers, identified as such) at the top of your resume to make it easy for hiring managers and recruiters to find.

Sample resumes

The following resumes—which are the resumes of real bridgers with their identifying information removed—illustrate a range of approaches for-profit executives might use to position their experience to be compelling to hiring managers at nonprofit organizations.

Sample resume 1 (Jill Cook): highlight nonprofit experience.

In her summary, Jill emphasizes the skills that are most transferable to the nonprofit roles for which she'll be applying. In her nonprofit section, she describes her extensive volunteer work. Rather than simply listing each of her past volunteer roles, Jill elaborates on her experience and is explicit about her accomplishments. In her for-profit section, Jill describes each of her past employers, helping a nonprofit hiring manager to more quickly understand the size and scope of her roles. She uses numbers well to make her contributions clear and concrete.

Sample resume 2 (Diane Jackson): demonstrate ability to produce results.

By including an objective at the top of her resume, Diane helps nonprofit hiring managers to quickly assess her for opportunities in a specific functional area (operations) and sub-sector (education). Diane uses a consistent format for both her professional and volunteer histories, helping the reader to focus on the content and look at her experience holistically across sectors. She uses a "results" bullet in each job description to call attention to and quantify her accomplishments, presenting the picture of a capable, results-oriented person who can be effective in a variety of settings.

Sample resume 3 (Jack Smith): emphasize for-profit and nonprofit functional skills.

Jack includes a "career profile" at the top of his resume to put his nonprofit experience on a par with his professional history and highlight his functional skills, which are highly transferable across sectors. In the main body of his resume, he provides extensive detail on his community experience first, rather than crowding it into a line or two at the bottom of his resume. While Jack has a technical background, he avoids jargon and technical specifics.

Sample resume 1: Jill Cook

Jill Cook

31 Vista Creek Lane, Ashfield, MA 01746
Home: (508) 555-2491 Cell: (508) 555-0600
jillcook99@yahoo.com

Summary

Senior executive with 25 years of experience in general management, marketing, and sales. Strategic, results-driven leader with proven ability to create new organizations, spearhead change, and conceptualize and execute innovative, sustainable initiatives.

A compassionate manager with excellent interpersonal and communication skills, dedicated to fostering a working environment that encourages collaboration and optimizes team performance. Many years of leadership roles in nonprofits and government. Elected official for town School Committee (nine years). Founded two organizations to improve local education. Proposed and worked to pass a law assisting elderly and disabled low-income Massachusetts residents, which has been adopted by six Massachusetts communities.

An aptitude for addressing cultural diversity. Lived in England, South Africa, and Israel. Fluent in French.

Nonprofit Volunteer Experience

Tax Relief Fund for the Underserved	Present - 1998
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Founder and Member

Founded town committee to identify and assist low-income elderly and disabled residents. Conceived and wrote, with State Rep. Janet Fitzmueller, first statewide bill establishing a tax-relief fund for elderly and disabled residents (Mass. General Law, Chapter 39, Section C). Named *Ashfield Monthly* (local newspaper) "Person of the Year" in 1999 for community service.

Ashfield School Committee	1995 - 2004
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Assistant Chair (elected position)

Introduced strategic planning to school district, resulting in new curriculum programming, significant improvements in standardized-test scores, and an annual review process for goal-setting.

Oversaw construction of four school buildings, chaired the Policy Subcommittee, participated in staff contract negotiations, hired two superintendents, worked with town committees to pass two tax overrides, instituted goal-based evaluation systems for administrators and teachers, and introduced programs for at-risk students resulting in a reduction of special education students.

Massachusetts Department of Education	1995 - 1998
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Vice Chair, Advisory Council

Assisted Massachusetts Department of Education in developing strategies to advance differentiated instruction in public schools, resulting in increased state funding and the creation of the Office for Gifted and Talented within the Department.

Ashfield Education Foundation	1993 - 1997
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Founding Board Member

Organized first Regional Education Foundation conference in New England in 1994 to educate communities about how to establish and grow public school education foundations.
 Helped create first capital plan to address long-term, predictable infrastructure investments.

For-Profit Experience

Paper Solutions, Inc., Lakerun NH	2004 - Present
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\$300 million publicly held paper converter with three divisions and multiple distribution channels in North America.

Vice President, Marketing & Sales

Lead 40 sales and marketing professionals nationwide. Create and implement strategy, sales, and profit growth plans for two markets.
 Developed new-product and new-market initiatives that resulted in development of multiple new products and product lines (several already launched) that are moving the division into untapped markets with high profit potential.
 Improved profitability of a \$120 million division from losses at the beginning of 2005 to record profit month in October 2005 by introducing an innovative, margin-based sales incentive plan.
 Developed performance-based measurement tools to support account profitability improvement.
 Moved division's largest customer from break-even to record profitability.

Highmark Associates, Natick, MA	1994 - 2004
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Consulting firm specializing in strategy development and market research for more than 30 public and private companies in a range of industries, including financial services, plastic, health care, and energy-efficiency consulting.

President and Owner

Identified new market and product opportunities for many organizations, using research tools such as online surveys and 360-degree, in-depth qualitative and quantitative interviewing.

Advised private equity firms on the strategic implications of potential acquisitions, as part of their due diligence process.

Led strategic planning projects for multiple clients, utilizing data-driven customer, vendor, and employee feedback; projects resulted in specific annual operations plans for each company.

Served as featured speaker on unique due diligence and research process at four national conferences focused on corporate growth and strategy development.

Modern Office Corporation, Watertown, MA	1992 - 1994
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\$300 million contract furniture dealership.

Vice President and General Manager

Led sales, marketing, and operational activities.

Restored profitability in 18 months by reorganizing staff, introducing programs to improve morale, instituting new compensation program and streamlining cost structure.

Vice President of Marketing, Hospital and Health Care

Spearheaded 48% sales and profit increase in two years by establishing a channel-focused sales and marketing division to sell health-care furnishings to hospitals and long-term-care facilities.

Created tracking and performance measurement tools for divisional accountability.

Introduced partnerships with leading industry manufacturers, new compensation programs, sales training, and collateral materials.

Stellar Supplies, Inc, Framingham, MA	1982 - 1992
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\$3 billion, Fortune 500 office products manufacturer.

National Sales Manager, Mass Market, Office Products Division

Responsible for U.S. sales into mass market accounts including warehouse clubs, mass merchants, and food and drug chains.

Within one year opened two major retailers, adding 15 products, and converted a major drug store retailer's business, resulting in incremental sales of \$4 million.

Market Manager, College and Mass Market; Product Manager, Ring Binders

Created and implemented marketing and sales strategies resulting in 39% sales and 45% margin gains in two years.

Introduced qualitative research techniques resulting in new product category.

Education

MBA, New England School of Business, Portland, ME; Highest Honors

BA, Drama, Woodley College, Fairfax, VA; Cum Laude (College Year in Cape Town, South Africa)

Sample resume 2: Diane Jackson

<p>DIANE JACKSON</p> <p>120 Fairview Drive • Carlisle, NJ • 19618</p> <p>w: 908-555-0097 • diane.jackson@comcast.net • c: 212-555-0159</p>	
OBJECTIVE	
To apply operational leadership skills and experience in a dynamic, education-focused nonprofit organization	
SUMMARY	
<p>Eighteen years of experience in management, strategic planning, and analysis</p> <p>Proven ability to develop a vision, achieve consensus, and deliver results in a wide variety of corporate and nonprofit settings, with increasing levels of official authority</p> <p>Strong leadership, interpersonal, and communication skills</p>	
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	
<p>Independent Consultant, Carlisle, NJ (2003-present)</p>	
	<p>On volunteer basis serve as Director for Enliven, a nonprofit organization providing <i>pro bono</i> consulting services to innovative, education-focused organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developed and executed capacity-building needs assessment and strategic plan in preparation for expansion of a \$1.5 million after-school program; identified needed upgrades in the areas of program evaluation, organizational communication, marketing and systems; <i>results</i>: organization executed strategic plan and has expanded from three sites to five over two years while increasing enrollment at existing sites ○ Facilitated strategic-planning meetings/retreats for three organizations ○ Provide ongoing coaching and informal strategy consulting to leadership team of local charter school founded in 2004 <p>Led strategic planning process for \$600 million division of large financial-services company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developed process to understand and assess market environment, determine levers of client value, evaluate business strategies, and

	<p>implement selected plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facilitated planning sessions among diverse senior management teams with varied objectives to achieve consensus on goals, strategies, and plan ○ <i>Results:</i> Plan accepted by Corporate; division targeted for additional investment; management team reported plan was best and most integrated they had ever done; engaged to return following year to facilitate planning sessions and to refine process to address additional investment/growth potential <p>Developed process and approach to ensure on-time compliance with new SEC regulations for large mutual fund company</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Worked with large, cross-company task force and several external legal firms to develop process to identify, document, and assess all regulatory policies and procedures within six-month window ○ Outlined and justified requirements for staffing, systems expenditures, and organizational changes ○ Prioritized work to be done prior to regulatory deadline vs. future enhancements ○ <i>Results:</i> Staffing and systems expenditures approved; project proceeding on schedule
<p align="center">Fordham Investment Management Services, New York, NY <i>Senior Vice President (1991-2003)</i> <i>Vice President (1989-1991)</i></p>	
<p><i>Institutional Retirement Services Group (1999-2003)</i></p>	<p>Headed Marketing for Large Plan Services division, which provides 401(k) plan administration to Fortune 500 companies</p> <p>Co-led company-wide task force capturing assets eligible for distribution from 401(k) and other qualified plans</p> <p><i>Results:</i> Large Plan Services gross sales increased 20% over two years; gross rollover sales increased 25%</p>
<p><i>Retirement Services Group (1997-1999)</i></p>	<p>Served on management team for start-up business unit capturing assets eligible for distribution from 401(k) and other qualified plans</p> <p>Launched and managed 70-person inbound and outbound telephone sales and retention operation</p> <p><i>Results:</i> Increased asset retention 41% over baseline; increased gross sales</p>

	38%; increased customer satisfaction
<i>Tier One Asset Group (1996-1997)</i>	<p>Managed Operations and Customer Service division supporting Fordham's high-net-worth customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed and implemented strategy for integrating tiered service delivery with expanded suite of investment and advice products and multi-channel access targeted at \$1 million-plus investors Directly managed 60-person operations group that handled all back office processing for specialty products Oversaw management of 300-person phone group supporting high-net-worth customers and products Launched high-end customized service and product offering aimed at \$2 million-plus investors Managed operating marketing budget of \$60 million <p><i>Results:</i> Achieved higher-than-average customer satisfaction among high-net-worth customers; increased multi-product ownership; increased gross sales</p>
<i>Customer Problem Resolution Group (1992-1996)</i>	<p>Managed 200-person Customer Problem Resolution division handling customer problem and dispute resolution across all retail products for entire customer base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redesigned process and organizational structure using customer input, process analysis and competitive benchmarking to increase efficiency and customer focus Empowered frontline employees to make more decisions while customer on phone Redefined department "philosophy" from confrontational to customer advocacy Instituted comprehensive measurement system Managed operating budget of \$35 million <p><i>Results:</i> Increased customer satisfaction with problem resolution process by over 10 percentage points; decreased average turnaround time by over one day; doubled percentage of customers who felt that their issue was resolved at first contact; maintained level unit costs</p>
<i>Various strategic planning and project</i>	<p>Oversaw wide variety of strategic-planning and project-management assignments involving personnel from across the company, including many inter-departmental and cross-functional teams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed implementation of two-year, \$2 million redesigned customer

<p><i>management assignments (1989-1992)</i></p>	<p>statement system that affected 3.5 million customers; <i>results:</i> increased customer understanding score on survey about statements, decreased statement preparation time by two days and costs by 15 percent</p> <p>Introduced streamlined systems for fulfilling customer paperwork requests; <i>Results:</i> reduced time to meet customer paperwork requests by 35 percent</p> <p>Supported business plan development for several business units, including facilitating working sessions, drafting documents, and presenting results; <i>results:</i> executed over 25 business plan development projects</p>
<p>Markmen Consulting Associates, Boston, MA <i>Consultant (1988-89)</i> <i>Associate Consultant (1986-1988)</i></p>	
	<p>Successfully planned and executed analytical projects of all sizes in various industries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple acquisition/joint venture analyses for \$2 billion diversified information-services company resulting in two purchases of over \$200 million each ○ Development and implementation of purchasing cost reduction program for household products/pharmaceutical products firm ○ Implementation of simplified marketing/options packaging program for Big-Three automobile manufacturer <p>Interacted with all levels of client personnel and served as primary point of contact for matters relating to delivery of service and scope</p>
<p>NONPROFIT, VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE</p>	
<p>The Children’s Exploration Center, New York, NY <i>Overseer (2003-present)</i> <i>Co-Chair, Outreach Task Force (2003-2004)</i></p>	
	<p>Led project to develop strategy for expanding visitation from communities outside of New York City</p> <p>Coordinated activities of 14-member task force made up of employees, board members, and other volunteers; facilitated meetings and discussions</p> <p>Directed analysis and market research</p> <p>Developed prioritized list of tactical and strategic recommendations, including</p>

	<p>new marketing messages, redesigned communications, and community outreach programs</p> <p><i>Results:</i> Task force recommendations presented to Center management and incorporated into 2004-2005 plan, resulting in 10% increase in museum attendance during Q1 and Q2 of 2006 and 5% increase in special program enrollments during same period</p>
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<p>ABCs Nursery School, Carlisle, NJ <i>Treasurer (2001-present)</i></p>	
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	<p>Manage ongoing financial and budgeting process for \$200K annual budget</p> <p>Facilitated strategy and teambuilding sessions with 10-person school staff focused on addressing and resolving issues and identifying areas for improvement</p> <p>Led efforts to secure space after landlord of 25 years abruptly terminated school's lease</p> <p>Worked with landlord (local church) to develop solution that met needs of both parties and ultimately secured long-term lease at terms attractive to school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Developed financing plan combining fundraising, loans, and rent concessions to fund \$100,000 renovation project o Managed renovation project, including selecting contractor, approving design, and chairing committee overseeing work o <i>Results:</i> ABC relocated to new space at their existing location at lower rent; renovation completed on time and on budget; relations between school and church are stronger than ever
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EDUCATION	
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	<p>Parker College, Bristol, RI B.A., Mathematics, 1986</p>
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REFERENCES	
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	<p>Available upon request</p>
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Sample resume 3: Jack Smith

Jack K. Smith

10 Hobart Street, Waxhall, VA 22153

703.555.2459 (cell)

jksmith@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE

To leverage operational, management, and nonprofit experience to benefit the growth and development of a nonprofit organization

CAREER PROFILE

Professional History

ALPHAMEG, Inc.

Vision One Systems

MatrixSoft, Inc.

Carter Hodges, LLP

Images International

Skills

Relationship management

Training

Communication

Employee development

Organization alignment

Financial management

Operations management

Community Experience

Washington Cares Leader

Greater DC Food Bank Board Member

Logistics Committee

Nutrition Committee

Building Committee

Images International Volunteer Team Founder

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

Greater DC Food Bank

Leading hunger-relief organization supplying food to hundreds of community food pantries across greater DC

Board Member

October 2002 – Present

Provide oversight and support around policy development, organizational alignment, and fiduciary compliance

Committee Member

September 2001 – Present

Logistics Committee: hire consultants; evaluate distribution network, capacity utilization, and future capacity needs; identify short- and long-term improvement opportunities

Nutrition Committee: work with staff to determine nutritional guidelines for food bank activities

Building Committee (2001-2003): determined new facility strategy; recommended methodologies and plans to Board; hired architects and contractors; executed plan

Washington Volunteers

Volunteer clearinghouse that engages DC professionals in projects that support and enrich local organizations

Project Leader

February 1999 – Present

Lead and coordinate monthly projects with variety of local organizations

Utilized opportunity to familiarize self with DC's non-profit sector

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ALPHAMEG/Vision One Systems, Springfield, VA

Supplier of advanced process-control software for microelectronic manufacturing industry

Deployment Services Manager

March 2002 – Present

Manage \$8M annual revenue, global professional services, customer relationships, and accounts receivable

Work strategically with client executives to establish and deliver process control roadmap

Participate in new customer sales process; negotiate and close contracts with current customers

Led teams to develop pricing strategy and quote and sales process

Worked with teams to develop product lifecycles, generic project plans, legal and sales documents

Managed systems integration for order processing with ALPHAMEG, developed and delivered training

Account Manager

October 2001 – March 2002

Oversaw \$3M in annual revenues, customer relationships, projects, and resources

Developed forecasting process and tool utilization; trained sales and account management teams

MatrixSoft Inc., Hunteerton, MA

Vertical application service provider offering integrated best-of-breed solutions for high-tech equipment manufacturing industry

Director of Account Management

March 2001 – July 2001

Managed \$1M in annual revenues, customer relationships, projects, and resources

Worked strategically with account executives to establish and deliver technical roadmaps

Communicated with all MatrixSoft organizations to effectively execute customer solutions

Business Consultant: Pre-Sales Engineer

July 2000 – March 2001

Collaborated with sales team on presentations for complex sales cycle

Demonstrated software capabilities, sold software features to array of US software companies

Carter Hodges Consulting, Boston, MA

Global business and strategy consulting firm

Manager

September 1998 – July 2000

Client: \$120M speaker design and manufacturer

Projects: Inventory Assessment, Product Development Process Design, and Master Scheduling

Specific Role:

Conducted inventory assessment through interviews and data analysis, identified root causes, and presented and sold solutions to client CEO and executive team

Managed product development process design, working closely with CEO and VP of engineering; created workplans; guided consultants through research, interviews, and workshops with 70 client employees and final development of new engineering process

Client: \$300M medical devices manufacturer

Project: VantageSoft/Business Process Assessment and Improvement Plan

Specific Role:

Conducted business, manufacturing, and VantageSoft assessment of seven divisions with team through use of individual and cross-functional interviews as well as systems analysis

Developed and presented findings and opportunities to client executive team

Client: \$150M exercise equipment manufacturer with plants in MA, CA, and MN

Project: VantageSoft Software Implementation

Specific Role:

Oversaw Order-to-Cash, Product Configurator, and Engineering module implementation

Managed implementation of MN plant, including staffing, workplans, and client meetings

Trained client on new processes and paperwork responsibilities; transitioned role to “super-users”

Images International, Pittsburgh, PA

Global company producing photographic materials and equipment

Manufacturing Manager, Dispersion Manufacturing

August 1995 – August 1998

Managed \$58M continuous chemical flow process and 22 employees

Developed and maintained Annual Operating Plan (financial), capacity model, performance matrix, employee commitment plans, employee development plans

Reduced process waste by 43%, defects per unit by 48%; managed large capital projects

Flow Team Manager, X-Ray Cassette Manufacturing January 1994 – August 1995

Managed business of 40 empowered employees manufacturing medical product

Reorganized planning system, reduced delivery time by 50%

Initiated supplier improvements in delivery and quality through matrix measurement system

MRPII Project Leader, Carton Manufacturing June 1993 – January 1994

Managed project; organized presentations, data, and audit

Achieved Manufacturing Resource Planning "Class A"

Process Coordinator, Carton Manufacturing June 1992 – June 1993

Interacted with offset printing, die cutting, and gluer operations

Overhauled operations information flow and Bills of Material

EDUCATION

Connecticut Polytechnic Institute, Hartford, CT M.B.A. 1998

Executive Master in Business Administration

University of Southern New England, Concord, NH B.S. 1992

Major: Industrial Management

Minors: Manufacturing Management, Industrial Engineering

Bridgestar (www.bridgestar.org), an initiative of the Bridgespan Group, provides a nonprofit management job board, content, and tools designed to help nonprofit organizations build strong leadership teams and individuals pursue career paths as nonprofit leaders.