



From the UN to the private sector: your transition guide

Resume Worksheet

Resume Strategy: Transitioning to the private sector requires more than just rewriting your resume for every job—it’s about **repositioning your experience** strategically. Instead of getting stuck in an endless cycle of customization, the key is to build a resume that speaks the language of your target industry from the start. By structuring your resume around industry priorities and adjusting only the profile summary and skills section for specific roles, you ensure it remains relevant, impactful, and easy to update. This approach saves time, avoids unnecessary tweaks, and positions you as a strong candidate across multiple opportunities.

How to Apply This Approach

✅ Step 1: Create an Industry-Specific Resume

- Identify the industry you’re targeting—do a deep dive into researching the industry.
- Ensure your resume includes industry-standard terminology, relevant skills, and must-have competencies—as you do more industry research, you’ll begin to see a pattern of what the industry looks for.
- This version remains static for most applications.

✅ Step 2: Customize the Profile Summary for Each Job

- Instead of rewriting your resume, update the Profile Summary to highlight what’s most relevant to the role, for example:
 - If a company emphasizes stakeholder engagement, make that your lead-in.
 - If the job prioritizes impact measurement, move that up in your summary.
- This small but strategic tweak ensures alignment while saving time.

✅ Step 3: Adjust Minor Details If Necessary

- If a job calls for a very specific skill or system that you have but isn’t emphasized in your resume, determine whether to integrate it into bullet points or if a better fit would be to add it into your “Areas of Expertise / Skills” section.
- Avoid major rewrites—*just refine for clarity*.

The Bullet Point Checklist: Crafting High-Impact Resume Statements

Your bullet points should do more than just list responsibilities—they need to tell a compelling story of impact, strategy, and leadership. A well-crafted bullet point not only quantifies success but also highlights the skills and expertise that set you apart. By using the **“Achieved X by doing Y using Z” framework**, you ensure your resume speaks the language of the private sector while maintaining clarity and relevance.

Use this checklist to evaluate each bullet point and refine your resume for maximum impact:

- ☐ **It clearly demonstrates impact.** (e.g., Your actions drive measurable results; You improve efficiency, increase engagement, or save costs.)
- ☐ **It is specific.** (e.g., It quantifies success with data—dollars managed, percentage increases, number of stakeholders impacted.)
- ☐ **It differentiates you from others.** (e.g., It uniquely reflects your expertise and leadership rather than something anyone with the same job title could have written.)
- ☐ **It is free of redundancy.** (e.g., This bullet doesn’t repeat details covered elsewhere; Two similar bullets can be combined into one stronger statement.)
- ☐ **It emphasizes leadership, strategy, or innovation.** (e.g., It showcases decision-making, problem-solving, and high-level influence rather than just execution.)
- ☐ **It uses strong, active language.** (e.g., It starts with a powerful verb like “Spearheaded,” “Optimized,” or “Transformed” instead of weaker phrases like “Responsible for” or “Helped”).
 - Try this action verb tool if you feel stuck: [Resume action verbs – Career Advising & Professional Development | MIT](#)
- ☐ **It is relevant to your private-sector transition.** (e.g., It highlights industry specific transferable skills.)

Value Proposition: Many social impact professionals feel uncomfortable talking about their work in terms of “value” or “problem-solving” outside of a mission-driven context. But in the private sector, understanding and articulating your value is not about being transactional—it’s about clarity and confidence. Companies want to know how your skills and experience can drive meaningful results, just as you have done in your career thus far.

Think of your value proposition as the bridge between your expertise and the business world’s priorities. It’s not just about what you’ve done—it’s about how your ability to drive change, manage complexity, and build relationships can be applied to create solutions in a corporate setting.

Start by drafting a simple personal brand statement that captures your unique strengths and impact. This statement can serve as the foundation for your elevator pitch, networking conversations, and interviews:

***I help** _ (who?) _ **to** _ (do what?) _ **by** _ (how?) _ , so that _ (what's the benefit?) _.*

EXAMPLE: Mariela's value proposition

***"I help** businesses **to** bridge the gap between social impact and business objectives **by** ensuring that purpose and profit work together to create sustainable solutions, **so that** corporate social and environmental investments are maximized to their greatest impact potential.*

This statement isn't set in stone—you can refine and adjust it as your job search or business venture evolves. The key is to own your expertise and communicate it in a way that resonates with the private sector while staying true to your mission-driven background.

You probably didn't expect to be doing this much industry research just to revamp a resume—but this work is setting you up for success in more ways than one. It's positioning you as someone who understands the industry you're targeting (even if it's new), someone who is decisive about their next steps, and someone who is ready for the challenge ahead. Granted, you might not feel that way right now—especially while navigating the chaos of furloughs, layoffs, and uncertainty—but how we present ourselves matters. We have to step forward with confidence, owning the skills and experiences that have brought us to this point. This isn't just about getting a job—it's about building a career that aligns with your strengths and aspirations. And you are more than ready for it!