

# Business Careers

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## Communicate with brevity, value and finesse

**Dear Sam:** I recently graduated with a master's degree in Library and Information Science. I am heavily applying to a wide variety of jobs and try to adapt my résumé to each position; however, I feel as though I am not giving enough detail. I would greatly appreciate your thoughts! – *Angela*

**Dear Angela:** Thank you for sending your résumé, and yes, you are indeed being too brief in the explanation of your experience. Here's my advice:

- Nix the objective statement and replace with value-added content.

First, you must develop a compelling qualifications summary showcasing the value you offer a prospective employer. Think about this section as the way you will get your foot in the door – as this is often the case with an ever-so-brief 4- to 7-second screening process. Take this opportunity to present evidence about why you are more qualified or skilled than your competitors. Currently, and as is the case with most objective statements, the most important real estate on your résumé communicates only what you want. Objective statements have never been part of a best practices-based résumé for at least 10 years; therefore, in 2012 your résumé should absolutely not open with such a section.

- Present content to convey value in your experience.

As you feared, your explanations of your experiences are too brief to convey value to a



**SAMANTHA NOLAN**  
Dear Sam

hiring manager. You're attempting to stand out from your competitors; imagine that a considerable percentage of your competitors, especially in a field as specialized as library science, will come to the table with similar credentials – likely an MLS degree and some related practicums or internships. If this is the case, stating the basics or obvious aspects of your experience will do little to nothing to differentiate your candidacy.

You currently explain your three library roles – from 2009 to present

– in fewer than 45 words, which doesn't allow you to disseminate key factors of each role and puts you at a major deficit should your résumé be screened by a computer system searching for keywords. You need to add value to this section, incorporate full explanations of your responsibilities, and highlight key contributions or differentiating factors, all the while keeping in mind you are answering the question, "Why should I bring in Angela for an interview over her competitors?"

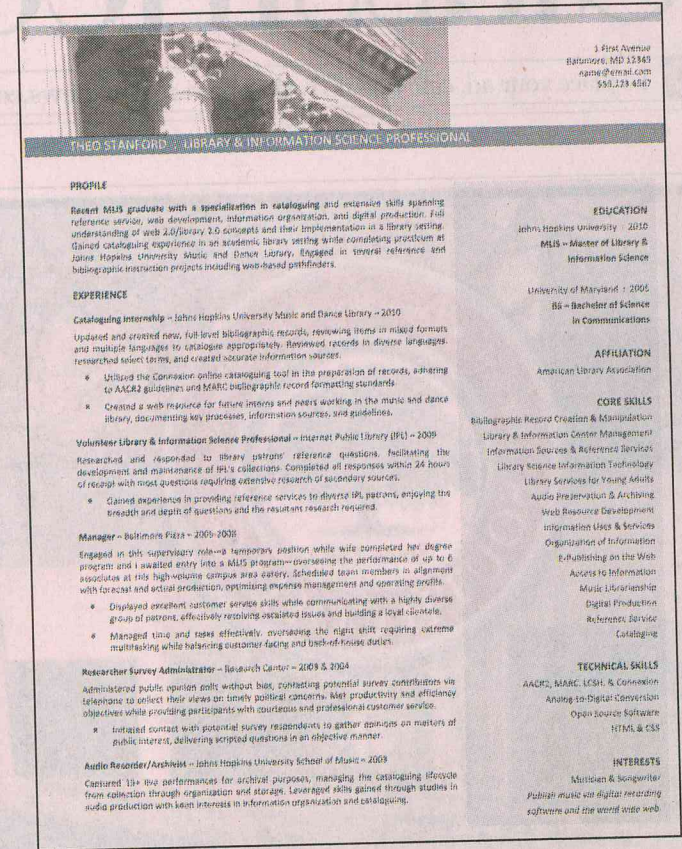
Go through your résumé, bullet point by bullet point, and think about your statements more fully. What does a statement like "marketing development" really tell a prospective employer? I would say very little unless you provide additional context of your role and impact in that arena. The hope on your résumé is to answer questions before they arise; to provide a hiring manager with a document that doesn't evoke unanswered, and potentially disqualifying questions but rather piques interest in your candidacy by providing enough content for the reviewer to determine

you have value to offer their organization.

- A compelling page layout is critical to success.

While some would argue that résumé format takes second seat to content, I often argue, especially in the entry-level situation in which you find yourself, that the design and layout of your résumé are critical to its success. You will be vying for limited positions amid a crowded field of similarly qualified candidates. In this environment, you must do all you can to get noticed. Construct a well-crafted and well-written résumé packaged in an aesthetically pleasing, compelling format. Take the time to reformat your résumé to become more engaging, eliminating the overused template you have used for a more unique presentation of your candidacy. Take a look at a library science résumé for one of my clients (also available online at [www.ladybug-design.com/blog](http://www.ladybug-design.com/blog)), noticing attention to detail when it came to content and format.

The great news is that you have not had a tool to effectively open doors. Your



**After**

qualifications are solid, and your experience is on target. Once you revise the approach you are taking to presenting your candidacy, I am certain you will begin to yield responses. Best to you.

**Samantha Nolan is a certified professional résumé writer and owner of Ladybug Design, a full-service résumé writing firm. Reach Samantha at [dearsam@ladybug-design.com](mailto:dearsam@ladybug-design.com), [www.ladybug-design.com](http://www.ladybug-design.com) or 888-9-LADYBUG (888-952-3928).**