

Writing Strong Resume Bullet Points: Communications, Journalism, and Public Relations Industries

Turn experiences into impact using the SAR method

What do employers look for in these industries?

Effective resumes in these industries highlight measurable results such as improved audience engagement, media visibility, or brand recognition. Overall, this handout will help you write strong accomplishment statements for roles in communications, journalism, and public relations.

Tip: Remember to [customize your resume](#) by incorporating keywords from the job description. For additional guidance on formatting and structure, review our [Resume/CV templates](#).

SAR Method: Core Framework

- ✓ Your resume must contain concise bullet points to describe your experiences
- ✓ SAR statements effectively outline your accomplishments in a simple, informative way

What is SAR?

S = Situation: What was the context? (e.g., problems you encountered or tasks you took on)

A = Action: What did you specifically do? (e.g., use a strong past-tense [action verb](#))

R = Result: What changed because of your actions? (e.g., improvements or outcomes)

Note: When formatting a resume bullet point, the sequence should be Action + Situation + Result. Also, try to incorporate numbers, percentages, or dollar amounts to further demonstrate your impact.

A weak example for a summer internship could be:

- Helped with social media and communications tasks for a non-profit organization

A strong example for a summer internship using the SAR method could be:

- Developed 20 Instagram posts promoting community events during a 2-month municipal election campaign, which helped increase registrations by 35%

How the SAR Method was implemented:

ACTION: Developed

SITUATION: 20 Instagram posts promoting community events during a 2-month municipal election campaign,

RESULT: which helped increase registrations by 35%

Note: This statement includes industry-specific context and skills, clearly communicates the result or intent of the action, and incorporates numbers to strengthen its impact.

Tip: For current students, review the [Carleton Career Competencies](#) to identify the knowledge, skills, and attributes developed through your academic journey. These reflections can help articulate your employability and write stronger SAR statements.

Impact Levels: Early Experience vs Advanced Experience

This section will help you brainstorm the context of your work (Situation) and the impact of your contributions (Result), with sample examples tailored to your level of experience.

Early Experience (e.g., co-ops, placements, internships, projects, clubs, and entry-level roles)

Considerations for the Situation	Questions to Help Frame the Result
• Carleton Career Competencies (e.g., Community Engagement, Innovation & Collaboration, or Digital Literacy) • Tasks completed (e.g., # of reels created, podcasts produced, news articles written, events organized) • Platforms, tools, or methods used (e.g., Instagram, Canva, WordPress, Hootsuite)	• What objectives did your work support? (e.g., platform engagement, student awareness, accessible content) • What evidence showed your work was effective? (e.g., # of views, shares, viral moments, registrations) • What skills did you strengthen? (e.g., CP writing, interviewing, content planning)

Communications Assignment: Collaborated with 4 students to evaluate captions across a club's Instagram Reels, producing 10 tips that improved readability for students with disabilities

Student Reporter: Conducted 11 interviews to write a 1,000-word article on off-campus food insecurity, garnering 580 online views while informing readers about rising living costs

Advanced Experience (e.g., professional experience and leadership roles)

Considerations for the Situation	Questions to Help Frame the Result
• Large-scale projects (e.g., investigative series, crisis communications, media relations campaign, corporate rebranding) • Communication challenges (e.g., declining readership, misinformation, risks) • Key stakeholders (e.g., media executives, news outlets, government, SMEs, sponsors)	• What broader public impacts emerged? (e.g., stronger public trust, consumer confidence, positive media sentiment) • How much reach did your work have? (e.g., 10K followers, 3K listeners, 250 guests) • What organizational results improved? (e.g., audience growth, advertising revenues)

Financial Correspondent: Directed coverage of local financial literacy disparities, producing a feature article that helped secure \$75K in funding for workshops serving low-income residents

PR Coordinator: Managed TikTok campaigns for a pizza restaurant by creating chef spotlights and promotional content that reached 50,000 users and increased reservations by 15%

Other ways to show impact if you do not know exact numbers

- **Scope** (e.g., approximate # of stories, events, stakeholders involved): Produced promotional materials for 8-10 sponsors, ensuring consistent brand messaging
- **Scale** (e.g., size of team, publication, audience): Managed a portfolio of journalists and graphic designers to publish a monthly national magazine within tight deadlines
- **Quality Improvements** (e.g., readability, accuracy): Edited and fact-checked student submissions, strengthening story clarity, accuracy, and consistency with CP-style writing

Tip: Begin [tracking data](#) to incorporate stronger metrics into future SAR statements.

