

## Writing a Ministry Resume

### What makes a ministry resume different?

A well written ministry resume reflects your preparation for ministry, your philosophy of ministry, your practice of ministry, and your passion for ministry. When it comes into the hands of a search committee it is likely to be *thoroughly read* (not just skimmed), studied, pondered over and discussed by the group. A ministry resume gives a the committee an in depth view of where you have been and what you are like. It tends to be longer, more personal, and more detailed than a traditional “business-focused” resume.

Like all resumes, a ministry resume summarizes your experiences and qualifications *as they relate to the job you seek*. To be most effective, your resume must be focused on the position and how you can meet the needs of the ministry. It should tell the readers who you are, what you know, what you have done and what you bring to the work of the ministry. It should help the search committee evaluate how well you align with the job and the mission and vision of the ministry.

Because a resume is a reflection of an individual, there is no one perfect way to approach writing one. However, there are some basic guidelines to follow and common mistakes to avoid. If you are pursuing a position in more than one field (perhaps church vs. parachurch ministry), you will probably need more than one version of your resume. You may also want to have a career counselor and a professional in your field(s) of interest critique your resume. In the end, you will want to make strategic choices about what to say on your resume and how to say it, so that your resume will be uniquely you.

### Before Starting Your Resume

#### Spent some time reflecting on the past.

- How do you know you are called to the ministry?
- What life experiences have prepared you for ministry? What have you learned along the way? Where have you had success? Where have you been challenged, and persisted until you overcame?
- You will need to have a thorough understanding of your experiences and the skills they represent in order to write a quality resume. Jumping to writing too quickly makes it easy to stop thinking about how you will demonstrate that you are ready to serve in professional ministry.
- You’ll need to be able to articulate *how* your experiences have prepared you for the job you seek. You’ll have to do this on the resume, and also to a greater extent in interviews.

#### Spent some time pondering the future.

- What do you hope to accomplish in ministry in general?
- What is your philosophy of ministry?
- How do you fit with the mission and vision of the ministry you are applying to work with?
- What excites you about ministry in general, and about this position in particular?



## Writing Your Resume

**Content:** Content is more important than format! The reader has to walk away from your resume with a clear picture of how your past experiences have prepared you for the ministry role you seek. Success in the past is an indicator of future performance. The most relevant information should be listed first; more relevant experiences should also have greater detail than less relevant ones. Here are some content guidelines:

- Make certain your contact information is complete, accurate, and current. Contact information should be placed at the top of the resume. Use only one address, phone number, and email. Including a picture is optional.
- Include a ministry objective (what you hope to accomplish) and/or personal ministry goals underneath the contact information. The reader wants to know what you are called to and what motivates you in ministry.
- List relevant information about your educational background in reverse chronological order. You can include descriptions of relevant coursework, but don't just list classes.
- Accentuate qualifications (gifts, skills, experience, accomplishments) relevant to the ministry role for which you wish to be considered.
- Not everything you have done is relevant. Put the most related and significant experiences first. Don't spend a lot of time or space on experiences or skills that are less relevant to the ministry context.
- Unpaid ministry experiences may be worthy of inclusion on a resume. Any experience where you have had an opportunity to practice an aspect ministry is worth considering as resume content—whether or not you were paid to do it.
- List experiences in a way that demonstrates what you have done and can do in ministry. Describe what you did, how you did it, who you did it for, and what outcomes occurred as a result.

**Formatting:** Your goal is to organize information so that it is clear and comprehensive, yet concise, orderly, easy to read, visually appealing, grammatically correct, and professional in appearance. Consider these points when making formatting decisions:

- Be consistent in the use of spacing, highlighting, punctuation, and style.
- Emphasize important items using capitalization, underlining, bolding, italicization, or bullets.
- You may find it more effective to communicate in short summary phrases instead of complete sentences.
- Determine how you want to divide information and title each section appropriately. This will make the organization of your resume immediately clear to the reader.
- Use attractive font styles of readable size.
- Allow plenty of space between sections and in margins, to avoid a cluttered look.
- Use action words, active language, and proper verb tense in describing experience.
- Carefully proofread (at least three times) to eliminate any spelling, grammatical, typographical, and punctuation errors. When errors are present it can signal a lack of attention to detail.



## New Ministry Grad

3003 Snelling Avenue North, MC #000 St. Paul, MN 55113

nmgrad@gmail.com

651-000-0000

*Seeking a position working directly with youth and their families in an urban church.*

## MINISTRY OBJECTIVE

- To love, serve, engage and support the church's and community's youth and their families
- To develop and implement effective spiritual formation programming
- To contribute and support the church staff, elders and other lay leadership
- To grow in the knowledge of our Lord, Jesus Christ and in the ability to develop others in that growth

**What drives me in ministry?** The opportunity to help youth and their families become engaged in seeking Christ in all aspects of their lives. To help breakdown barriers that keep youth from knowing Christ. Things that bring joy to my heart include: leading and seeing others come to Christ, see others using their gifts in ministry, and watching people become worshipers of God through their personal worship times and through lifestyles of worship. *(This is one example of a way to share your personal call and philosophy of ministry.)*

## EDUCATION

### Bachelor of Arts, Youth and Family Studies, Psychology Minor

Northwestern College, St. Paul, MN May 2012

### Certificate in Youth Leadership

Union Gospel Mission Summer 2009

### CPR and AED Certification

American Red Cross, July 2011 (valid through 2014)

## MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

### Youth & Family Intern, Joy Baptist Church, Roseville, MN, Fall 2010

- Actively mentored and trained 3 high school youth leaders in spiritual formation, evangelism and outreach methods.
- Developed bible study materials used weekly with over 60 youth.
- Communicated with parents about youth group activities and spiritual issues through personal emails and weekly e-newsletter
- Arranged a fall service event including transportation. *(don't neglect the organizational aspects of ministry!)*
- Attended and participated in church planning/staff meetings *(shows how you collaborated with the rest of the team).*
- *(Remember that you can always add more information depending on the requirements of the job you are applying for.)*

### Drama Team Leader, Teen Mania, New Orleans, LA, Summer 2010

- Directed a team of 6 high school youth presenting Christian drama to 1000's of youth throughout Mississippi and Louisiana.
- Raised over \$3500 of support.
- Interfaced with and supported local youth leaders in their evangelistic outreach.

### Church Treasurer's Assistant, Joy Baptist Church, Roseville, MN 2009-Present

- Recorded all contributions in QuickBooks.
- Assisted in annual budget development and reports.
- Assisted treasurer in distributing missionary support.



**Camp Counselor**, Union Gospel Mission, Summer 2008-2009

- Implemented programming for 25 disadvantaged junior high boys. *(depending on the position, you may want to talk more about what the programming was, and what the results of the programming were.)*

**Homeless Outreach Worker**, StreetLight Ministries, Minneapolis, MN 2008— present

- Meet with homeless men during weekly evening meetings while developing relationships with several men.
- Became familiar with the issues that the homeless face.

**ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCES**

**Resident Assistant**, Northwestern College, Roseville, MN 2010, 2011

**Personal Care Assistant**, ACR Homes, Roseville, MN, September 2010 – September 2011

**RELEVANT SKILLS AND STRENGTHS**

**Computer Technology:** Web maintenance, Adobe InDesign, Microsoft Publisher, Excel and Access databases

**Music and Multimedia Skills:** Acoustic Guitar, Keyboards, Writing and Arranging Music, Recording, Synthesizers, Sequencers, Midi Equipment, Drama, Sound Equipment, Music Software, Bass Guitar, Video, Lighting

**Language:** Speak Spanish at a basic conversational level; read and write Spanish with moderate fluency

**STATEMENT OF FAITH**

*This will likely be asked for at some point in the application process. It can be submitted as a separate document; sometimes it is included on/with the resume.*



## Sam Shepherd

12345 Second Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 11122

sshepherd@gmail.com

123-456-7890

*Seeking a position as a servant/shepherd that is responsible for the discipleship and spiritual development of established and new members of a church community.*

### MINISTRY OBJECTIVES

- To love, encourage, serve, support and grow into spiritual maturity families and individuals of the church and the greater community.
- To develop and refine an environment of effective spiritual transformation and sharing of the Gospel.
- To train and teach people to think biblically and live accordingly in the hope that is Jesus Christ.
- To contribute to and support the church mission, church staff, elders and other lay leaders.

**Personal ministry goals and passions:** I am called into a ministry in which I oversee the discipleship of a church, with probable personal involvement with small groups, young adults, men, families and single parents. I have a heart for teaching and training in biblical worldview, doctrine and apologetics, as I believe where the mind is convinced *to the point of action*, the heart and soul of a person will soon follow. Love, anchored in trust and obedience, powered by grace is the heart of the church's and person's walk with Christ and it is my heartfelt desire to feed, lead, exhort, guide, guard, and provide for the needs of those in my care as they become followers and ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ.

### EDUCATION

#### Bachelor of Science in Ministries Certificate in Christian Counseling

*Magna Cum Laude*

Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minnesota, July 2011

This program built on my foundation to give me a solid biblical theology, which also integrated hermeneutics, church history, ministry ethics, ministry philosophy, effective communication and a biblical worldview. In addition, the Counseling Certificate better equips me to help people in need (psychologically, spiritually and emotionally) and identify areas that call for advanced counseling.

### MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

#### Small Group Co-leader, First Baptist Church, Saint Paul, MN, 2008 - present

- Engage adults in conversations that lead to spiritual growth, biblical obedience and personal introspection.
- Select materials that are relevant to the group and biblically sound.
- Create an atmosphere that is both safe and comfortable for group interaction and openness.
- This group of mostly 40-50 year olds nearly doubled in size over a two year period.
- Facilitated both Dave Ramsey's "Financial Peace University" and the Focus on the Family's "Truth Project" during this time.

#### Jr. Sr. High Youth Leadership Team, First Baptist Church, Saint Paul, MN, 2008-2011

- Conceived and implemented in a team environment ideas and schedules for the year and made sure events happen that feed and enrich our youth's walk in the Kingdom including mission trips, service projects, teaching, evangelism and at times pure fun.
- Teach lessons as needed that interweave the Gospel, apologetics, worldview and the practical Christian life.



## **Young Adult Small Group Founder and Leader, First Baptist Church, Saint Paul, MN, 2011**

- Saw a need in our church community and upon receiving permission organized, selected materials, hosted and lead with minimal oversight.
- Developed a written curriculum for Bible study portion and assimilated that into worldview portion.
- Created an open and loving environment for the young adults to attend weekly with my wife as a partner.
- Very successful with this small number (5-8) of young adults who are asking for the group to continue and grow, one deciding to go to Bible school as a direct result.
- Have in previous years written and taught semester-long Sunday school curriculum to youth and adults.

## **Men's Bible Study Facilitator, First Baptist Church, Saint Paul, MN, 2009-2011**

- Co-lead this weekly Bible study of 5-6 men.
- Selected materials and books of Scripture to be studied.
- Arranged for outside speakers to enhance teaching on specific areas of study.

## **Men's Bible Study Leader, Church of the City, South Saint Paul, MN, 2004-2009**

- Co-lead this weekly study for several years, primarily selecting studies, organizing and increasing amounts of teaching as the group grew in their personal discipleship.
- Developed retreats and had the opportunity to bring men to Christ, reestablished men's walks after a period of backsliding and helped them grow in Christ.
- The church that this study started with ceased after the first year but the study continued and even grew in numbers to 8-9 men at its height.

## **Guest Preacher, First Baptist Church, Saint Paul, MN, 2010-2011**

- Developed messages from the ground up, completely unsupervised. With each message I integrated my education to become better at this craft.
- Preached in front of the congregation three times and received positive feedback and many noted growth as a preacher.
- Used both expository and topical methods in preaching, an exegetical approach to study of the Scriptures.
- Sermon transcripts and audio recordings provided upon request.

## **ADDITIONAL WORK AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

**Financial Advisor**, VALIC Financial Advisors, Edina, MN, 2002-2008.

**Financial Advisor**, New England Financial, St. Paul, MN, 2001-2002.

**Career Agent**, Farm Bureau Financial Services, Davenport, IA, 2000-2001.

**Sales and Service Specialist**, Ecolab Pest Elimination Services, Davenport, IA, 1987-2000.

**Vice Chairman**, Secondary Steering Committee, PACT Charter School, Ramsey, MN, 2009- Present.

**Joint and Secondary Committee Member**, PACT Charter School, Ramsey, MN, 2008-Present.

**Transportation Committee Member**, PACT Charter School, Ramsey, MN, 2007-Present.

**STATEMENT OF FAITH, TESTIMONY AND REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.**