



XAVIER UNIVERSITY

MENTORING PROGRAM

CAREER SERVICES CENTER

Tips for Writing a Bio

Let's face it, next to public speaking, writing can be the most paralyzing act for most of us. Even if you are a writer, writing a bio can be daunting. Here are some tips for writing your bio.

1. Keep it short

I've heard a short bio referred to by a variety of terms: biography, about me, work bio, personal profile, business bio, life story, bio resume and my autobiography, to name just a few. While there's no right or wrong term, it may help you to remember the difference between bio and biography.

Bio = short. Biography = long.

Don't write a biography when a bio will suffice. Normally it's best to limit your bio to four or five sections. If it's too long people won't read it. When writing a personal profile or "about me" for your website, you can make it a little longer if you wish.

2. Briefly highlight your main achievements

The purpose of writing a bio is to demonstrate your professional credibility. Unlike a resume (which should include your complete career history), a work bio only needs to cover the "high points" of your career. Here's another way to think about it: your professional bio is a little advertisement for you. Wouldn't you agree that the best advertisements are memorable because they highlight key features with very few words? For the mentor program, you can expand and speak about some personal areas. This allows the mentor to get a snapshot of you as a person prior to you communicating or meeting.

3. Let your personality show

Since your professional bio is an advertisement for you, make it reflect the real you. If you're a down-to-earth person, use unpretentious language. If you have a particular passion, let the reader know. If you love to joke around, include some humor when you write a work bio (but be careful, humor can be tricky). Include personal information such as hobbies, family status and pets. As



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stated above, this helps the mentor get a sense of who you are outside of school and career aspirations.

4. Make it easy to read

When you write a bio, break the information into short paragraphs (no more than three sentences in each paragraph). Studies show that when people are faced with a large block of text (especially on a computer screen), they just skim over it quickly. By making your paragraphs nice and short, you'll increase the likelihood that people will actually read your bio.

~ adapted from BioTemplates.com <http://biotemplates.com/>



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Jane X. Doe

Home

1234 Love Lane
Indianapolis, IN 46142
419-555-1234

School

The Commons, 215
Cincinnati, OH 45207
513 745-3000
xavierjq@xavier.edu

Personal Summary

I grew up in Indianapolis, Indiana. I am one of five children; I have three brothers, one sister, two dogs and a cat. My older brothers (Joe and Steve) are studying Pre-Med and Pre-Pharmacy, while my younger brother (Gabe) and sister (Mary) are still in high school back home. My father is a civil engineer who owns his own business and my mother is a homemaker. They have been married for twenty-five years. I learned to fish by the age of 4 and to water and snow ski by the age of 6. I love spending time with my siblings and am known as the comedian of the family. I can always find a way to crack a joke. I was able to go on a mission trip to Peru my freshman year at Xavier and it has definitely changed my life, goals and expectations in a good way. I was born in Cincinnati, but moved multiple times, as my father was in the Marines. I choose Xavier University because all of my uncles, aunts, and cousins live here in Cincinnati and I have always wanted to go to a Jesuit college.

Career Plans & Aspirations

Well, this is a funny question for me, as I have no real clue. I am a junior public relations major and have been told I have a friendly, outgoing personality. I like talking to and being around people, so I thought public relations would be a good major to declare. But, I have always really liked math (I'm taking Calculus next semester) and reading the financial pages in newspapers has always intrigued me. So, I am really not highly focused on any one career path just yet, but I'm told that's okay for a sophomore. When I graduate, I see myself working in larger company verses a smaller company, and in a large city verses a small town.

Education

Xavier University

College of Arts & Science
Bachelor of Arts, Public Relations,
Expected graduation May 2012

Cincinnati, OH XXXX - present

GPA: 3.8

- Public Relations Student Society of America, Publicity Chair
- Student Alumni Association, Secretary
- Club Gymnastics
- Muskies Own Recruitment Effort, Volunteer Campus Tour Guide

Northwest High School,

Indianapolis, IN XXXX - XXXX



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College preparatory course work including trigonometry, calculus, biology, chemistry, anatomy and Physics.

- Photography Club, member
- Freshman Class President

Work Experience

Social Media Marketing Intern, Cincinnati, OH 3/XXXX - present

Created two Facebook page advertisements to increase involvement in mentor program. Strengthened online community membership by over 50 percent by creating Facebook page, LinkedIn group and twitter account. Created and executed two targeted communication plans to aid in building awareness and developing an involved and interactive community.

Cherry Hut Restaurant, Indianapolis, IN 5/XXXX - 8/XXXX

Waiter. Waited tables at local diner. Responsible for seating, taking orders, serving, and clearing of assigned tables. Also worked in kitchen and occasionally ran the register.

Benzie County Press, Indianapolis, IN 11/XXXX - 1/XXXX

Newspaper Delivery Boy. Delivered weekly newspaper to 100+ residential homes over a 15 mile area. Collected subscription fee from customers once a month by going door-to-door.

Hobbies, Interests & Miscellaneous

- Indianapolis Colts fan
- Accomplished photographer
- Can juggle five balls at once
- Pretty good at Spanish
- Enjoy hiking, water skiing, boating, fishing, hunting, snow skiing, snow shoeing