



Resume Writing Tips

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Introduction

HRAM is a nonprofit organization, established in 1948 and is located in Omaha, Nebraska. It is dedicated to the advancement of human resource professionals and serves the Omaha, Council Bluffs, and surrounding areas. Our membership consists of over 1000 members in the Omaha vicinity. HRAM promotes a comprehensive understanding in the field of human resource management by providing a forum for the education and professional interaction of its members. HRAM is a local affiliate of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the leading voice of the human resource profession, which provides a wealth of services and programs to broaden your skills and make you more valuable to your organization.

RESUMES

In a few, brief seconds, your resume must speak loudly and clearly of your value as a potential employee. A resume provides a concise picture of you! It must accurately communicate your objective, qualifications, experience, and accomplishments.

Plan First

Before you begin your resume, you need to get a clear understanding of what the employer is looking for and what you have to offer. Ask yourself the following questions:

- ◆ What would make someone the perfect candidate?
- ◆ What would set a truly exceptional candidate apart from a merely good one?
- ◆ What does the employer really want?

If you are seeking a job in a field you know well, you probably already know what would make someone a superior candidate. If you are not sure, you can gather hints from the help wanted ads, job postings on the Internet or at an employment office. You can ask people who work in the company or the same field. If you do not address the employer's real need, they will not respond to your resume.

The Visual Presentation

Your resume gives the employer a first opportunity to assess how effective you are in written communication. Furthermore, the employer may make a determination based on how visually pleasing your resume is compared to other candidates competing for the same position.

- ◆ Fonts: Arial, Times New Roman
- ◆ Size of type: 10-16 (preferably 12)
- ◆ Left hand justify text
- ◆ Use 8 1/2" x 11" bond paper (preferably 24 pound, 24% cotton)
- ◆ Plain paper with no designs
- ◆ Recommended colors: ivory, off-white, light blue, light gray

- ◆ Use matching paper for cover and thank you letters and envelopes
- ◆ Use laser or ink-jet printers
- ◆ Print on one side
- ◆ Preferably one page in length
- ◆ Spatial Separation:
 - (parenthesis) or bullets
 - -dashes or CAPTILIZING

Visual Presentation of Scannable Resumes

Increasing numbers of employers are moving toward automated (paperless) resume processing and applicant tracking systems. The resume is scanned using OCR (optical character reader) to convert the images to text. The computer uses artificial intelligence to read the recognized text and pulls out key words from standard headings (e.g., objective, education, and experience).

After the computer has scanned the resume, it assigns job categories to the applicant's record and builds a skill inventory from the information it has read. Recruiters can query the database using search criteria or key words to find candidates whose skills and/or experience fit the job opening. Therefore, the more skills the computer finds on the resume, the better the chances that the resume will be picked from the database.

- ◆ Use white or very light 8 1/2" x 11" paper, printed on one side.
- ◆ Center your name and address at top of resume.
- ◆ List your phone number on its own line.
- ◆ Print on laser or ink-jet printer. Avoid dot-matrix printers.
- ◆ Use standard fonts: Times, Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, Courier.
- ◆ Font size of 12 is preferred.
- ◆ Do not squish lines together to save space.
- ◆ Use common headings: Objectives, Education, Work Experience, Skills.
- ◆ Use concrete words rather than vague descriptions: "managed" rather than "responsible for managing."
- ◆ Use "action" words: "Created," "organized," "managed," "negotiated" and "designed."
- ◆ Include phrases like "problem-solving ability," "detail-oriented," "self-directed," "team-oriented," "enthusiastic," "hardworking," "solid organizational skills," etc.
- ◆ Avoid *italics*, underlines, and shadows.
- ◆ Avoid graphics, vertical or horizontal lines and boxes.
- ◆ Use enough key words to define your skills: Data entry, Microsoft Word, Harvard Graphics, Lotus 1-2-3.
- ◆ Use more than one page if necessary.
- ◆ Spell out acronyms: Use Human Resource Association of the Midlands instead of HRAM.

Content of Resume

- ◆ Use phrases starting with action verbs
- ◆ Don't use personal pronouns such as "I" or "me".
- ◆ Keep descriptions as short as possible.

- ◆ Don't use more than 5-6 lines for a description.
- ◆ Use quantities, amounts, dollars and values.
- ◆ Spelling and grammar must be perfect.
- ◆ Don't cite or include everything from your job description.

- ◆ Don't include salary information on your resume.
- ◆ Don't include personal information: Gender, religion, marital status, number of children, irrelevant hobbies.

Choosing a Format for Your Resume

Presentation is an important part of the resume-writing process because this document will be representing you. Careful consideration must be taken when choosing the format which will best represent you. An example of each format will be provided in this brochure. However, it is recommended that you get a resume book to review the different formats.

First you will need to determine which type of format to use. There are three basic types: Chronological, Functional, and Combined. Listed below are brief descriptions of each type.

- ◆ Chronological: (See example #1.)
 - More traditional format for a resume
 - Lists your work experience in reverse chronological order.
 - Used primarily when staying in the same career field, or when applying for very conservative jobs.
- ◆ Functional: (See example #2.)
 - Highlights your major skills and accomplishments from the very beginning.
 - Key skills and qualifications are emphasized and organized in order of importance, to support your career objectives and interests.
 - Used primarily when changing careers. (Military personnel, homemakers returning to the workplace, etc.)
 - Appropriate for use by students, candidates with spotty careers, generalists or for those with a wide range of skills in their given profession.
- ◆ Combination: (See example #3.)
 - Maximizes elements of both the chronological and functional formats.
 - Resume can be more than one page.

Parts of the Resume

Job Objective: A job objective identifies the type of work you are seeking. The more focused your objective, the better it works. An effective objective is simple, clear and to-the-point. Do not use “fluffy” phrases that do not mean anything. (i.e. “Allowing the ability to enhance potential and utilize experience in new challenges”.)

It is appropriate to have several different resumes, each with a different objective, each specifically created for a different type of position. Have an objective that is perfectly matched with the job for which you are applying.

Below are examples of poor and good objectives:

- ◆ **Poor:**

- An exciting position with room for advancement.
- An entry-level position in computer programming or retail sales.
- Seeking a position that will utilize my background abilities while providing opportunity for growth.
- ◆ **Good:**
 - A counseling position working with children and families.
 - Financial Management
 - Seeking position as a staff writer with a newspaper.

Summary: A summary isolates five or six key attributes about your primary qualifications. The summary is placed near the top of your resume. Pick the qualifications that best demonstrates why an employer should hire you and assemble them into five or six sentences. It is acceptable to leave off an objective if you use a clear, concise summary section.

- ◆ Write short, brief statements (one-liners).
- ◆ A short phrase should describe your profession.
- ◆ Followed by a statement of broad or specialized expertise.
- ◆ Followed by 2 or 3 additional statements related to any of the following:
 - breadth or depth of skills
 - unique mix of skills
 - range of environments in which you have experience
 - a special or well-documented accomplishment
 - a sentence describing your professional objective or interest.

Examples:

- ◆ Over ten years as an organizational catalyst/training design consultant with a track record of producing extraordinary results for more than 20 national and community-based organizations. A commitment to human development and community services. Energetic self-starter with excellent analytical, organizational, and creative skills.
- ◆ Commander, Chief Executive Officer of the US Navy, Atlantic Fleet. Expertise in all areas of management, with a proven record of unprecedented accomplishment. Proven senior-level experience in executive decision-making, policy direction, and strategic business planning. Experience in congressional relations, financial and personnel management, research and development, and aerospace engineering. Extensive knowledge of government military requirements in systems and equipment.

Education

- ◆ List education in reverse chronological order.
- ◆ List your type of degree (BA), graduation date, name and location of university.
- ◆ List degrees or licenses first, followed by certificates and advanced training.

- ◆ No degree received yet? If you are currently attending college and will be graduating soon, include your degree, and in parenthesis, the expected date of completion.
- ◆ If you have work experience, list education at the end of the resume.
- ◆ If you've just graduated, with not much work experience, list your education first.

Work Experience

List jobs in reverse chronological order. Describe only the last 10-15 years of your work experience. Include military experience and internships. You may also include any major volunteer roles that are job-related. If you worked for only one employer, list separately each different position you held there. This shows your job progression within the company.

Briefly describe your duties in five or fewer sentences. Refrain from writing a lengthy job description.

- ◆ Include name of company, city, state, dates, and job title.
- ◆ Use action verbs: “consulted,” “organized,” “facilitated,” “transformed,” “reduced,” etc.
- ◆ Use short phrases and appropriate tenses.
 - past tense = organized; present tense = organize

Skills and/or Accomplishments

- ◆ List both specific and general skills and/or accomplishments that are noteworthy.
- ◆ List knowledge of foreign languages, if appropriate to the job for which you are applying.
- ◆ List technical knowledge:
 - Operating systems
 - Programming languages
 - Platforms
 - Software, Hardware
- ◆ List computer skills: Microsoft Word, Excel, Lotus, PowerPoint, and Harvard Graphics.
- ◆ List typing speed or similar information, if appropriate to the job for which you are applying.

Other Job-related Categories

- ◆ Include extracurricular activities
- ◆ List professional associations such as Human Resource Association of the Midlands.
- ◆ Awards
- ◆ Civic/community leadership or activities
- ◆ Briefly summarize any publications.

References

Do not list reference contacts on your resume. If you want to include references, add them on a separate sheet titled: References. It is not necessary to add: “References Available Upon Request”. However, it states to the employer that this is the end of your resume and is acceptable.

NOTE: Keep salary information on a separate sheet of paper.

Resume Style

There are three styles of resumes available for presenting your credentials to a potential employer: Chronological, Functional and Combination (Chrono-Functional). Your particular circumstance will dictate the right format for you.

The Chronological Resume

This is the most common and accepted form of a resume. It is a chronological listing of job titles and responsibilities. Chronological resumes begin with the most current or recent employment, then work backward to your first job (or ten years into the past-- whichever comes first). This format is called chronological reverse order. The chronological resume is good for demonstrating your growth in a single profession. It is suitable for practical work experience and for those who have not experienced too many job changes. A chronological resume usually consists of:

- ◆ Contact information
- ◆ Job objective
- ◆ Career objective
- ◆ Career summary
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Description of work history

The Functional Resume

This particular format focuses on the professional skills you have developed over the years. It does not place emphasis on dates. Functional resumes are similar to the chronological, but the approach is different. An employment objective must be clearly in mind since this type of resume focuses so strongly on skills. Functional resumes are used by experienced individuals changing career fields and by those pursuing employment in nonprofit organizations. This particular format is appropriate for a number of personal circumstances, specifically:

- ◆ Mature professionals with a storehouse of expertise and jobs.
- ◆ Entry-level types whose track records do not justify a chronological resume.
- ◆ Career changers who want to focus on skills rather than credentials.
- ◆ Individuals whose careers have been stagnant, who want to focus on the skills that can get a career under way, rather than on the history in which it came about.
- ◆ Military personnel embarking on a new career.
- ◆ Those returning to the workplace after a long absence.
- ◆ People closer to retirement than to the onset of their careers.

The Combination Chrono-Functional Resume

A combination resumes has all the flexibility and strength that comes from combining both the chronological and functional formats. This is the strongest tool available for those who have a performance record or who are on a career track. This format is comprised of:

- ◆ **A Career Summary.** A professional is spotlighted with a clear sense of self, a past of solid contributions and a clear focus on future career growth. This summary will include a power-packed description of skills, achievements and personal traits that scream, "Success!"
- ◆ **A Description of Functional Skills.** Following the summary, the resume starts out like a functional resume and highlights achievements in various categories, pertinent to the job/career goals, without any reference to employers.
- ◆ **A Chronological History.** As you continue preparing this combination resume, you will find that it will switch from functional approach to the chronological approach. This is done in reference to name of companies, dates, titles, duties, and responsibilities.
- ◆ **Education.** This optional category is determined by the space available and the unique aspects of your background.

Resumes provide a well-thought-out, concise picture of you. It must convey clearly and accurately your objective, qualifications, experience, and accomplishments. Resumes are a first impression of you. Your resume must speak to your value as a potential employee. Your value must be demonstrated in just a few, brief seconds; because, in the business world, that's all the attention a resume will get.

Resume Checklist

1. Categories

- Name, address, phone number(s), email
- Objective
- Summary (optional)
- Professional experience or skills
 - Dates
 - Company name(s)
 - Job title(s)
 - Job description(s)
 - Responsibilities
 - Duties
 - Achievements
- Education
 - Name of institution(s)
 - Degree(s)
 - Year(s)
- Other
 - Professional memberships
 - Awards
 - Honors
 - Publications

2. Format

- Logically organized
- Reverse chronology (where applicable)
- Internal consistency
- Appropriate amount of space for each entry

3. Layout

- Margins
- Airiness
- Easy readability
- Eye-catching (underlining and use of capitalization, where applicable)
- Individualized (has a "personal touch")

4. General

- Avoidance of abbreviations
 - Inclusion of exact detail
 - Sentences versus phrases (consistent use of one or the other)
- Achievement-oriented

5. Proofreading

- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Written Style
 - Naturalness
 - Clarity
 - Absence of cliches or business jargon

Senior Level HR Manager (Chronological Resume)

9999 Cornhusker Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68130

Office Phone: (402) 000-0000
Home Phone: (402) 000-0000

OBJECTIVE: Senior Level Human Resources Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Career Builders Consulting, Inc.

Omaha, Nebraska

Vice President of Human Resources

1997-Present

Manage all human resources, recruiting and training programs for a \$500M company with 300 non-union employees in 5 locations. Report to the President.

- Implemented innovative performance-based job evaluation program for all levels and trained management on policies and procedures.
- Managed the consolidation of business units and facility closure activities; reduced corporate headquarters staff by 30% without decrease in service performance.
- Championed the use of self-administered human resources services to improve benefit programs, which resulted in savings of over \$125K/year.
- Recruited outstanding senior management and other key staff.
- Improved employee benefits and wage policies; negotiated policy improvements in employee relations, training and management selection.

Basket Weavers and Suppliers, Inc.

Omaha, Nebraska

Director, Human Resources and Management Training (1992-1996)

1974-1997

Managed all human resources and training programs for a \$500M corporation with 12 regional offices and over 3,000 employees. Reported to the President and performed key role in change management, business development, acquisitions and plant closings.

- Re-organized human resources department during 3 major acquisitions while the company grew from \$100M to \$500.
- Effectively managed the human resources issues and labor law compliance in numerous plant closings in multiple states in union and non-unions facilities.
- Managed all management recruiting, employee development programs and the training department.
- Established and implemented an Affirmative Action program and maintained compliance with all federal and state employment regulations; record of never losing a case.
- Managed all staff reductions and major change management issues.
- Managed all workers' compensation and OSHA requirements for the company.

Product Manager (1989-1992)
Corporate Personnel Manager (1974-1989)

Managed the human resources for 6 domestic locations with 2,200 employees and 1,300 employees in Juarez, Mexico. Reported to the Vice President-Service Division.

- Consulted on acquisitions and new plant locations throughout North America.
- Recruited all management and technical employees.
- Reduced turnover by 50% through the development of innovative wage and benefit plans.
- Key leader of the Training Team to facilitate management training: developed permanent training and video communications department for the company.
- Successfully worked in two union drives against the Machinists Union to keep the plants non-union.
- Trained staff in discipline and grievances, interviewing, effective communications, union avoidance training, corporate policies and other employee development classes

ABC Aerosmith, Inc.
Omaha, Nebraska
Vice President of Human Resources

1970-1974

Managed the employee relations activities of 10 manufacturing facilities in the Midwest. Responsible for all labor relations, negotiated union contracts, grievance processing, and unfair labor practice charges.

- Primary corporate representative in union drives and successful in winning support for non-union plants in all locations; developed successful information campaign to promote non-union benefits.
- Handled difficult negotiations and prolonged labor unrest that resulted in the end of union control in the Detroit and Chicago plants.
- Managed new plant start-ups in several states and recruited all employees.
- Recruited and staffed key management employees; facilitated the development of a new management team responsible for improving profits by 60% in 36 months.
- Developed a new affirmative action program, which resulted in increasing minority recruitment by 68% and retention of existing employees by 35%.

EDUCATION

M.B.A., Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

B.A., Business Administration, Nebraska State College, Cornell, Nebraska

Extensive continuing education in business management, human resources, employment law, negotiation, manufacturing, production management, project management, union avoidance, grievance procedures and related classes.

Ronald D. Public (Functional Resume)
1212 South 103th Court
Omaha, Nebraska 68124

Office Phone: (402) 999-8181
Home Phone: (402) 333-3333

Objective: Management Position

HIGHLIGHTS OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Over 25 years experience in broad-based administrative and operational management, product development, human resources and strategic business analysis.
- Skilled in project management, process and systems improvements, and management re-engineering efforts which impact the bottom-line.
- Leader in developing modern employee and independent contractor incentive programs to maximize sales to meet production goals and corporate profitability.
- Seasoned manager and team leader of small to medium-sized departments.
- Experienced motivator, coordinator and builder of high quality teams.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Management and Administration

- Accountable for budgets up to \$2M in operational expenses and over \$145M in compensation payments to over 12,000 employees.
- Implemented programs to open new agribusiness units nationwide.
- Managed work teams of up to 85 employees in administrative and human resources professional and support positions.
- Managed the initial re-engineering stages to consolidate 35 administrative systems with the objective of increased sales productivity, producer retention, and substantially reduce the \$10M annual expenses for Operations, Human Resources and Operations.

Human Resources Management

- Managed the strategic compensation plan and implemented a variety of successful strategies to facilitate increased sales and revenues through improved incentives.
- Managed all compensation, benefit, and health services operations for over 100 positions and 2,500 employees of a large agricultural services firm.
- Achieved \$1M savings in 2 years through development of additional health care choices, employee cost sharing, and implementation of new insurance options for employees.
- Directed successful project to rewrite and evaluate 240 job descriptions.
- Created and implemented salary survey strategy that, coupled with new job evaluation system, solved internal equity problems.

Financial Management

- Directed the improved re-design of compensation plans including controls and post project monitoring; established increased confidence with financial implications, assumptions, and modeling results; completed in 3 months, ahead of expectations and under budget.
- Consulting member to operational departments to facilitate the design of effective sales incentive programs to improve revenues.
- Achieved \$1.5M first year medical plan savings through program redesign, utilization review, employee cost sharing, and implementation of a new benefits program.
- Created administrative solutions to reduce department staff levels by over 15%.
- Managed development of the requirements analysis and detail design of a state-of-the-art real-time management information system.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ABC AGRIBUSINESS CORPORATION

6/79 to 2/03

Lincoln, Nebraska

Vice President – Operations and Administration (4/95-2/03)

General Manager, Employment and Recruiting (6/79-4/95)

CORPORATE INTEGRITY SERVICES

9/72-6/79

Smallmouth, New Jersey

Vice President, Human Resources (6/75-6/79)

Assistant Vice President, Personnel Services (9/72-6/75)

EDUCATION

M.B.A., Marketing and Business Development, University of Pittsburgh

B.S., Human Resources, University of Rhode Island, Portsmouth

Certified Employment Professional, 1990-Present

Certification: Senior Professional in Human Resources, 1980

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member, Society for Human Resource Management, 1978-Present

President, 1993

Member, Personnel Association of Southern Nebraska, 1979-Present

Treasurer, 1996

REFERENCES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Anna Market (chronological resume)

00010 North 10093 Ave. Apt #2
Omaha, NE 68100
Phone: 402 999-8888
e-mail: aabbcc@hotmail.com

- Objective To obtain an entry-level position in marketing.
- Education University of Nebraska at Omaha, May 2004
Bachelor of Science Business Administration
Management/ Marketing-Advertising Management
GPA – 3.79
Relevant Course Work – Marketing Research; International Marketing; Corporate and Business Strategy; Marketing Management; Legal Issues in Management; Advertising
- Work experience July 2003 – Present Daylight Underwriters Omaha, NE
Junior Account Clerk
Process payroll and all related procedures associated with payroll
Set up new clients in Access database
Provide customer service for clients
Process Workman’s Compensations Certificates of Insurance
- Nov. 2002 – July 2003 Howie’s Home Improvement Omaha, NE
Head Cashier/ Customer Service
Coordinated the front end of the store
Supervised 5-10 cashiers at a time
Assisted department manager with scheduling and front end activities
Provided excellent Customer Service
- May 2000 – Nov. 2002 Eve’s Garden Omaha, NE
Hostess/ Cashier
Greeted and seated customers
Balanced and cashed out each servers tabs and cash drawers
- June 1999 – April 2000 ABC Grocery Store Omaha, NE
Front End Manger/ Customer Service
Managed 10-15 people at a time on the front end of the store
Effectively directed the front end to keep customer flow going and avoid lines
Ran the customer service desk
- Professional Memberships
- Delta Sigma Pi – professional business fraternity
VP of Alumni Relations / Senior Guide Fall
 - Golden Key National Honor Society

Mid-Level HR Manager (Combination Resume)
8858 Prairie Street
Murray, Nebraska 68555

Email: mlhrmsr@star.000
Home Phone: (402) 000-0000

Objective: Management Position in Human Resources

Summary: Over 20 years of increasing responsibilities in Human Resources management, compensation, benefits, recruiting and team building.

Human Resource Management

- Maintained and administered compensation and benefit programs
- Developed effective programs for recruiting, retaining and developing key talent
- Designed and managed employee relations programs

Specialized Skills

- Certified in Risk Management program development
- Implemented innovative and successful applicant tracking system
- Developed wellness program accredited for resulting in 20% decrease in absenteeism and a 5% decrease in turnover

Union and Manufacturing Experience

- Coordinated multiple contract negotiations
- Recognized for most successful liaison relationship with Union for the history of the company
- Orchestrated efforts to achieve ISO 9000 certification
- Led development and implementation of customized risk management for manufacturing environment

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

GBD Continental, Inc.

Blue Valley, Nebraska

1989-Present

Human Resource Manager

Responsible for all Human Resource functions including all recruiting, department budget, AAP, employee relations, safety, OSHA, Worker's Compensation and Benefits. Supervised staff of six employees.

- Compiled and presented Hourly and Salaried Wage & Benefit Proposal for three facilities.
- Recruited 320 professional and salaried employees in addition to over 2,500 hourly positions in less than 20 months.
- Conducted Confidential Employee Survey of all employment groups
- Wrote plant EEO/AA program, developed innovative recruiting/staffing programs.
- Designed improved HRIS for records management, candidate tracking and compliance reporting.
- Achieved \$1M savings in 2 years through development of additional health care choices, employee cost sharing, and implementation of new insurance options for employees.

JHK Industries, Inc.**1986-1989**

Moorhead, Nebraska

Director of Human Resources

Management position responsible for all human resources reporting directly to the President. This medium-sized manufacturing facility has 450 employees in a union environment.

- Handled staffing, recruitment of employees, contract negotiations, departmental budget, team building/training, disciplinary, policy & procedures, payroll, all benefits programs, retirement program for general, union and contract employees.
- Managed safety programs, worker's compensation, liability insurance, risk management, job descriptions, wage/ salary program administration, drug free workplace policy, random drug testing, and labor contracts and Union negotiations.
- Revised and implemented new Self-Insured Health Care Program; saved approximately \$150K.
- Negotiated two Union contracts and implemented effective employee retention program, which reduced management and professional staff turnover by 38% in 1 year.
- Developed improved recruiting practices that reduced turnover and decreased recruiting costs.

Blue Ribbon Insurance Company, Inc.**1981-1986**

Omaha, Nebraska

Director of Human Resources

Staff position reporting to President. Responsible for staff of five human resource professionals and all HR functions including recruiting, staffing, training, employee relations and compliance. Managed programs for Workers' Compensation, regulatory, safety, environmental, EEO/AA, FMLA, ADA and related regulatory programs.

- Established improved hourly and salaried wage programs, which increased compliance and reduced errors in payroll administration by 95%.
- Developed job descriptions for over 300 positions and trained the management and supervisory staff to conduct effective job analyses.
- Designed and implemented Drug Free Workplace procedure/policy and random drug testing.

EDUCATION

M.S., Human Resources, University of Nebraska at Omaha

B.S., Business Administration, University of Nebraska at Kearney

Senior Profession in Human Resources (SPHR)

PROFESSIONAL/CIVIC AFFILIATIONS

Board of Directors, United Way of the Midlands

Blue Valley Chamber of Commerce

Board of Directors

Past President

Member, Mid-Nebraska Region: American Human Resource Association