

Resume/Cover Letter Guide

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Resume Basics

The purpose of a resume is to get you an interview by showcasing how your skills, abilities and accomplishments relate to a specific job or internship. Recruiters spend an average of **7-10 seconds** reviewing a resume, so it is important to have a clean format, clear transferable skills, and strong accomplishment statements to make your resume stand out and lead to an interview.

Analyzing the Job Description

Before writing your resume, start by identifying the main skills, experiences, and keywords that the employer outlines in the job description. By matching your experience to the job and incorporating industry keywords, you will significantly improve your chances of capturing the attention of the employer or applicant tracking system. If you do not have a detailed job description, look up the job title on Onetonline.org.

SAMPLE RESUME

EXPERIENCE

Lead Peer Advisor, SJSU, San Jose, CA,
September 20XX - Present

- Oversaw 7 peer advisors and **addressed** **employee relation issues** such as distribution of workload
- **Assessed and directed** 30+ students per shift to appropriate resources and staff based on need
- Organized and managed **print and electronic files** to increase operational efficiency
- **Prepared and maintained records** of 200+ student logs and survey information

PROJECTS

Older Adult Intervention, SJSU, Fall 20XX

- Observed and **assessed** the home environment of an elderly adult
- **Developed therapy intervention plan** to enhance living satisfaction by increasing access to outside activities and community events
- **Presented** life story of older adult to a class of 30+ students and received an A on the project

SAMPLE HR JOB DESCRIPTION

TASKS

- **Interpret and explain** human resources policies, procedures, laws, standards, or regulations.
- **Prepare or maintain employment records** related to events such as hiring, termination, leaves, transfers, or promotions, using human resources management system software.
- **Address employee** relations issues, such as harassment allegations, work complaints, or other employee concerns.

SKILLS

- **Speaking** — Talking to others to convey information effectively
- **Critical Thinking** — Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- **Writing** — Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
- **Technology** — Using computers to program, write software, set up functions, enter data, or process information.

Bold Name, size 14 (everything else size 10-12)

Professional (not SJSU) email

Im A. Spartan

San Jose, CA 95126 | imaspartan@gmail.com | (408) 555-5555 | linkedin.com/in/imaspartan

OBJECTIVE

Optional - if included, include position title and company

Seeking a Grants Associate position with the San Jose Foundation for Education Advancement to help promote educational enrichment programs for youth in San Jose.

EDUCATION

Include associates degree(s) but not transfer history or high school

B.A., English; Minor in Social Science

Expected graduation date

May 20XX

San Jose State University, San Jose, CA, GPA: 3.7

Include if GPA is 3.0+

Relevant Coursework: Public Finance, Social Change, Society and Education

CERTIFICATIONS

Preferably upper division courses

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapist

June 20XX

Grant Writing for Education, LinkedIn Learning

April 20XX

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

List Experience first if more relevant than projects

School Development Project, SJSU

August 20XX – Present

- Research and identify prospective donors to help support K-12 after-school programs for various communities in San Jose
- Monitor grants and contracts tracking databases system to target new opportunities
- Develop communications materials for donors, sponsors, media and the public

EXPERIENCE

Can be paid or unpaid experience; start with most recent experience

Grants Associate, Mental Health Association of San Jose, San Jose, CA

August 20XX – August 20XX

- Maintained donor database using Razer’s Edge Software to process all financial donations made by individuals, grants, and corporations
- Consulted with current and potential donors about any changes in funding priorities to ensure proposals and grants met guidelines

Use present/past tense accordingly for present/past experience

Volunteer Activities Coordinator, Rock Lake Elementary, Fremont, CA

January 20XX - August 20XX

- Designed and implemented a tutoring program for 15 elementary school students
- Applied creative and innovative learning techniques including cross-cultural activities, games, journal writing, and discussion groups to increase student retention and learning

SKILLS

Languages: Fluent in English and Vietnamese

Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google Apps (Sheets, Slides, Docs, Meet), Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok), Zoom, Slack, SchoolLoop (LMS), Canva, Qualtrics

ACTIVITIES

Member, Poets and Writers Coalition, SJSU

August 20XX – Present

General formatting tips: Use a standard Sans Serif font (i.e. Arial, Calibri, Tahoma). Avoid italics/script fonts, lines, and graphics (unless in creative field). Keep to 1 page only. Use 0.5” - 1” margins.

Writing Accomplishment Statements

Writing strong accomplishment statements is key to demonstrating your qualifications to employers. Follow the S.T.A.R. method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to develop strong statements. Statements should be detailed, but succinct. We recommend keeping your accomplishment statements between **1-2 lines max**.

Situation/Task: *What did you do?* Start your statement with a strong action verb and describe the situation/task you were given.

Action: *How did you do it?* Describe what action you took and what skills you used.

Result: *What was the result?* Quantify with numbers or percentages whenever possible.

Situation/Task Example: Marketed event to 300 club members

Action Example: Utilized multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram

Result Example: Increased event registration by 20%

Final Statement: Utilized multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to market event to 300 members, increasing event registration by 20%.

See more before/after examples:

BEFORE	AFTER
Responsible for customer service.	Built strong customer relations by calming dissatisfied clients and following through problem resolution to completion; selected as primary agent to resolve customer disputes.
Prepared financial reports.	Designed, developed and distributed customized monthly budget results. Provided timely and accurate data for management analysis.
Led a team of student volunteers.	Recruited and managed a team of 10 volunteers to carry out a campus wide orientation which led to the highest satisfaction rating by participants.
Responsible for writing business plans.	Effectively demonstrated writing skills through the creation of a district business plan which reduced expenses by 10%.
Rebuilt a model radio for resale.	Rebuilt a 1900 Philco model radio using research and technical expertise which returned a 250% profit upon sale.
Responsible for the design of LCM interface.	Collaboratively worked with a team of 4 to design a comprehensive LCM interface. Presented the finished product in a timely manner allowing extra time to assist team with additional projects.

Examples of Accomplishment Statements

Here are some examples of how other students have demonstrated these skills through class projects, internships, volunteer work and part-time jobs. Review these examples to help identify and describe your own experiences using these skills.

□ WRITING

translate, write, compose, edit, craft, revise, draft

- Identified prospective donors and wrote grant proposals to help support K-12 after-school enrichment programs.
- Wrote engaging content for an Instagram marketing campaign which successfully increased company page views by 22%.

□ COMMUNICATION

convey, correspond, engage, publicize, connect, influence, mediate, negotiate, present, promote, teach, train, explain

- Trained new virtual employees via Zoom, effectively teaching company's procedures and processes.
- Serve as liaison to the campus community as president of the Creative Arts Club and present to various campus groups to increase awareness on campus.

□ TEAMWORK

collaborate, partnership, contribute, discuss

- Collaborated with team of five for class project to research and design curriculum for after-school program to meet needs of multicultural student populations.
- In partnership with 15 classmates and faculty, successfully organized and planned "Green Careers Week," a career information event for students.

□ INTERPERSONAL

cultivate, develop, foster, interpret, understanding, relate

- Counseled and advised diverse populations while working as a peer advocate in the Health Center at SJSU.
- Tutored and mentored high school students at Youth Works, an afterschool enrichment program for under-represented youth.

□ LEADERSHIP

initiate, spear-head, establish, launch, implement

- Initiated and developed the concept for SJSU's "Evening Art Walk," a virtual conference where creative arts students can showcase their final senior projects.
- Spear-headed planning for the Global Studies' commencement ceremony as part of the student leadership team.

□ COMPUTER SKILLS

program, design, compute, build, develop

- Created and maintained donor database using Razor's Edge Software including processing all financial donations (individual grants and corporate pledges).
- Designed an organization website using Wix and successfully published online reports and articles.

□ ATTENTION TO DETAIL

organize, edit, focus, attentiveness, concentrate, review

- Developed agenda, scheduled speakers, and organized discussion groups as coordinator for a 4-day international student conference.
- Edit copy for student newspaper and ensure that grammar, layout and content are accurate.

□ PROBLEM SOLVING

clarify, strengthen, solidify, improve, increase, resolve

- Improved access to health care services for qualifying community members by coordinating monthly tea meeting with lawyers, physicians, and social workers to efficiently process approvals.

□ ORGANIZATION

prepare, goal setting, coordinate, direct, manage, arrange, meet deadlines, deliver

- Organized and brought together local artists from all over the San Francisco Bay Area for fundraising and promotion a events.
- Provided organizational support to staff including managing schedules, supply purchasing, filing, preparing development materials, and coordination of meetings.

□ GLOBAL AWARENESS

global consciousness, cultural competency and awareness, forging common ground, inclusion

- Developed international counseling experience while participating in a summer internship at the University of Zambia.
- Founded an International Student Mentoring Program where domestic and international students are paired for a semester in order to foster awareness, inclusion and understanding of each other

□ ANALYTICAL

investigate, observe, discern, perceive, consider, evaluate, assess

- Assist in the evaluation and assessment of potential candidates for all administrative support openings as human resources intern.
- Review account ledgers and balances to ensure accurate billing and financial analysis.

□ FLEXIBILITY

adapt, acclimate, adjust, modify, familiarize

- Demonstrated adaptability while providing excellent customer service as shift leader in a busy retail environment while managing other various work priorities.
- Effectively transitioned from in-person office student assistant role to online email and live chat within one week

☐ **MULTI-CULTURAL**

collaborated on a team with students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds

- Effectively collaborated with peers and faculty from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to develop a presentation on how cross-cultural values affect communication in business environments.

☐ **CRITICAL THINKING**

critique, evaluate, review, measure, examine, problem solving

- Evaluated customer complaints and negative reviews for class project at assigned company site, and identified three key service issues as well as potential resolutions to improve customer satisfaction.
- Conducted journal review to examine best practices in addressing poor academic performance in K-12 settings.
- Created and presented intervention plan focused on strength based learning methods to improve academic performance at a local elementary school.

☐ **CREATIVITY**

conceptualize, design, create, invent, generate, draft, formulate, devise

- Conceptualized and developed an on-going project for ESL students resulting in a publication of the student's autobiographical works for use as a learning tool for ESL teachers.
- Created visual concept for Poets and Writers Coalition's magazine launch. Designed innovative advertising materials for Annual School of Social Work Fair which contributed to a 25% increase in attendance from the previous year.

☐ **DESIGN AND PLANNING**

forecast, develop, prepare, calculate, project, anticipate, propose, outline, create

- Developed four year plan for incoming freshman to support student success as part of student leadership project.
- Prepared annual budget based on analysis of previous year's costs and revenues as the student assistant for operations manager on campus.

Action Verbs

Use action words to get your point across clearly, efficiently, and with impact. Here are a few suggestions, listed by functional areas, to help you get started.

ANALYTICAL/

FINANCE

- Allocate
- Appraise
- Audit
- Balance
- Bill
- Budget
- Calculate
- Check
- Compare
- Determine
- Distinguish
- Estimate
- Factor
- Forecast
- Isolate
- Observe
- Project
- Reason
- Reconcile
- Sort
- Tabulate

CLERICAL/

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Archive
- Arrange
- Classify
- Collate
- Collect
- Compile
- Document
- Generate
- Implement
- Inspect
- Inventory
- Log
- Maintain
- Maintain records
- Monitor
- Operate
- Order
- Organize
- Prepare
- Process
- Purchase
- Record
- Reorganize
- Retrieve
- Schedule
- Screen
- Specify

TEAMWORK

- Collaborate with
- Contribute
- Participate in
- Discuss

COMMUNICATION

- Address
- Advertise
- Arbitrate
- Arrange
- Author
- Collaborate
- Communicate
- Contact
- Correspond
- Detail
- Direct
- Draft
- Edit
- Enlist
- Formulate
- Influence
- Interpret
- Invite
- Market
- Mediate
- Meet with
- Moderate
- Negotiate
- Persuade
- Present
- Promote
- Publicize
- Publish
- Reconcile
- Recruit
- Represent
- Respond
- Sell
- Solicit
- Speak
- Transcribe
- Translate
- Write

TEACHING/ TRAINING

- Advise
- Assess
- Assist
- Clarify
- Coach
- Conduct
- Coordinate
- Counsel
- Critique

- Educate
- Enable
- Encourage
- Evaluate
- Explain
- Facilitate
- Teach
- Train

CREATIVE

- Act
- Adapt
- Compose
- Conceive
- Conceptualize
- Create
- Customize
- Design
- Develop
- Discover
- Enhance
- Establish
- Fashion
- Founded
- Illustrate
- Initiate
- Innovate
- Institute
- Integrate
- Introduce
- Invent
- Make
- Modify
- Originate
- Perform
- Plan
- Propose
- Redesign
- Remodel
- Restructure
- Revitalize
- Shape
- Simplify
- Suggest
- Transform

LEADERSHIP/MGMT.

- Administer
- Analyze
- Approve
- Assign
- Authorize
- Chair
- Consolidate
- Contract
- Control
- Coordinate
- Cultivate

- Decide
- Delegate
- Designate
- Develop
- Direct
- Disprove
- Encourage
- Evaluate
- Execute
- Handle
- Head
- Hire
- Instigate
- Judge
- Launch
- Lead
- Lobby
- Manage
- Motivate
- Orchestrate
- Organize
- Oversee
- Plan
- Prioritize
- Provide
- Recommend
- Recruit
- Regulate
- Review
- Serve as
- Serve on
- Set up
- Supervise
- Validate

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Analyze
- Assemble
- Automate
- Build
- Calculate
- Code
- Compute
- Configure
- Construct
- Convert
- Create
- Debug
- Design
- Develop
- Devise
- Diagnose
- Draft
- Engineer
- Evaluate
- Fabricate
- Inspect
- Install
- Maintain

- Make
- Manufacture
- Operate
- Overhaul
- Process
- Produce
- Program
- Remodel
- Repair
- Solve
- Survey
- Test
- Upgrade
- Validate
- Verify

RESEARCH

- Accumulate
- Acquire
- Clarify
- Collect
- Compile
- Critique
- Diagnose
- Document
- Examine
- Extract
- Extrapolate
- Find
- Gather
- Identify
- Interview
- Investigate
- Organize
- Read
- Report
- Research
- Review
- Study
- Summarize
- Survey
- Synthesize
- Systematize
- Verify

RESULTS

- Increase
- Meet deadlines
- Obtain
- Produce
- Recognized as
- Reduce
- Resolve
- Restore
- Solidify
- Streamline
- Strengthen
- Transform
- Win

Transferable Skills

As a college student, you'll develop many skills from coursework, projects, internships, work experiences, club involvement, and activities. These skills are often very applicable to your career. Learn to identify these skills, highlight them on your resume, and articulate them in an interview.

INSTRUCTING / GUIDING

- Advising
- Coaching
- Communicating effectively
- Encouraging
- Group facilitating
- Teaching
- Training/developing

LEADERSHIP

- Confronting
- Coordinating
- Initiating
- Making Decisions
- Mediating
- Motivating
- Negotiating
- Planning/Effecting Change
- Policy Making
- Promoting Change
- Recruiting
- Risk taking
- Self-directing

ORGANIZING / MANAGEMENT

- Achieving/producing
- Committee working
- Delegating
- Evaluating
- Goal setting
- Maintaining
- Managing
- Organizing things, people
- Planning
- Prioritizing
- Program development
- Scheduling
- Supervising
- Team building
- Time management

MACHINE MANUAL

- Adjusting
- Assembling
- Building
- Constructing
- Controlling/operating
- Filing
- Maintaining
- Operating tools/equipment
- Preparing
- Producing
- Repairing
- Showing dexterity
- Typing

ATHLETIC / OUTDOORS

- Agility
- Climbing/lifting
- Landscaping
- Navigating
- Physical coordination
- Traveling
- Working with animals

NUMERICAL / FINANCIAL

- Accounting
- Auditing
- Bookkeeping
- Budget
- Planning/implementation
- Computing Skills
- Managing Finances
- Statistical Problem Solving
- Taking Inventory

INFLUENCE / PERSUADING

- Advertising
- Developing rapport
- Fund raising
- Influencing
- Mediating
- Motivating
- Negotiating
- Persuading/debating
- Promoting
- Selling

COMMUNICATIONS

- Communicating effectively
- Debating
- Editing
- Explaining
- Interpreting
- Interviewing
- Publishing
- Reporting
- Translating
- Writing

HELPING / HUMAN RELATIONS

- Caring, showing compassion
- Counseling
- Consulting
- Developing rapport
- Helping and serving
- Listening
- Public relations
- Referring
- Sharing credit
- Showing sensitivity
- Showing tolerance
- Team worker
- Understanding

INTUITIONAL / INNOVATING

- Adapting
- Balancing factors
- Conceptualizing
- Creating developing ideas
- Experimenting
- Improving
- Innovating
- Inventing
- Judging
- Making decisions
- Relating abstract ideas
- Sizing up people/situations

ARTISTIC

- Color discrimination
- Creative imagining
- Creative writing
- Designing: visual and spatial
- Displaying
- Expressiveness
- Musical composing
- Playfulness
- Playing musical instruments
- Restoring/decorating
- Visualizing concepts
- Visualizing shapes

OBSERVATION / INVESTIGATIVE

- Analyzing/comparing
- Appraising
- Clarifying problems
- Compiling
- Diagnosing
- Evaluating
- Information gathering
- Inspecting/examining
- Perceptive
- Problem solving
- Questioning
- Recording
- Researching
- Reviewing/evaluating
- Surveying
- Systematizing
- Testing
- Trouble shooting

PERFORMANCE

- Artistic presentations
- Demonstrating
- Public speaking
- Singing, dancing, acting

VMock is an online resume tool designed to provide you with instant and personalized feedback to help you improve your resume.

01. LOG IN with your SJSUOne ID and password

Currently registered students have access to VMock. To log in, go to vmock.com/sjsu.

02. UPLOAD or CREATE your resume

UPLOAD	CREATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upload your resume only as a PDF file.• Format resume into one column.• Use a standard font (e.g. Arial, Calibri, Verdana).• Do NOT add images, tables, or graphics.• Click on the blue <i>View Detailed Feedback</i> button to review the system feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Essential sections will be autopopulated into the resume builder.• Fill in applicable content for those sections.• Reorganize sections, if needed, by hovering over the right-hand side and selecting “Move Up” or “Move Down.”• Essential sections cannot be deleted, but if no content is entered, it will not appear in the downloaded version.• Add new section/subsection, based on experience and industry, from list of options or type in the search bar.

03. UNDERSTANDING VMock scoring

- VMock resume score is computed based on three main modules and evaluated against top SJSU resumes.
- Scoring on VMock is strict. Don't stress about your score; focus on your color zone and aim to move closer to the Green Zone.



Red Zone: Needs improvement. Pay attention to the feedback and specific examples.



Yellow Zone: You're on the right track. Follow the feedback to make improvements (score of 70 is good).



Green Zone: Great job! There might still be room for improvement. Make sure to review the feedback.

04. UPDATE your resume

- If you uploaded a resume and have reviewed VMock's detailed feedback, click the *SMART Edit* pencil to make revisions based on the feedback and suggestions; click *Rescore*.
- If you created a resume and have added all your content, click *Get Score*.
- Each time you Rescore, it will count towards your 10 resume uploads per year.
- Continue to make updates to your resume as needed. Aim towards reaching the Green Zone.

Keep in mind...

- Use VMock as a starting point to get feedback on a traditionally formatted resume.
- You are allowed **10** resume uploads per year.
- When questioning VMock's feedback, use your best judgment. For more information on resume format and content, or if you are unsure of what sections to add, click *See Template > Download template and guidelines*.
- For additional help, attend Career Center drop-in hours or schedule an appointment with a career counselor on [Spartan Connect](#).

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Applicant Tracking Systems

What is an applicant tracking system (ATS)?

ATS is a software used to process applications and streamline the hiring process. The ATS does the initial selection of candidates by efficiently scanning resumes with the goal of finding a match between the candidate's experience, qualifications, and skills, and the description of the job posting. You may be able to tell if a company uses an ATS description by seeing if their application link has a subdomain of an ATS company (i.e. companyname.taleo.com).

Why should I care?

99% of Fortune 500 companies / **66%** of mid-sized companies use applicant tracking systems.

75% of resumes never make it to the hiring manager because they are screened out by ATS.

So how do I write a resume that passes the ATS?

1. Upload your resume in the requested format. If there is no specified format, **MS Word** is recommended. Don't swap formats (e.g. upload your MS Word resume to Google Docs or vice versa). If you need a PDF format *download* or *save as PDF* from the original MS Word or Google Docs file.

Tip: Canva is not recommended for online applications, as PDFs saved from this platform CANNOT be read by ATS.

2. Use keywords in context. Mirror phrases, action verbs, keywords, and skills from the job description. If the job description states "hotel management" experience and you have that experience, use the same exact keywords in the resume.

Tip: Review the job description to highlight all of the technical skills required (e.g. Project Management, Autocad, Adobe Illustrator). Then identify all additional skills required (e.g. Quick Learner, Leadership, Collaboration). Finally highlight important action verbs (e.g. "lead", "coordinate", "facilitate").

3. Do your research. Look at the company's website to see what industry terminology they use. Look up current employees of the company on **LinkedIn** and see how they describe their experience.

4. Use standard formatting. This includes Sans Serif (e.g. Arial, Calibri, Tahoma), section titles (e.g. Education, Experience), and work history (e.g. job position, employer, dates). Avoid using resume templates, headers, footers, text boxes, tables, images, and graphics. Make sure to right align all dates on your resume, and use appropriate section titles (e.g. Project Experience, Work Experience, Education, Activities, etc.).

5. Go over the 1-page rule if needed. If you have relevant experience that goes over one page, feel free to write a longer resume as long as it is directly related to the job description. For students with many years of work experience, it is recommended to only reflect the last 10 years of positions. Finally, make sure your page(s) follow the **standard US 8.5x11** document size.

Resources

- [Jobscan.co](#) – Copy paste the job description and resume text to compare how they match in terms of hard skills, soft skills, and keywords.
- [WordClouds.com](#) – Copy paste the job description in this word cloud generator to identify common keywords in a job description.

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CV vs. Resume

A curriculum vitae, or CV, is a detailed record of your education and employment history. If you are applying to academic positions, research grants, graduate school, and positions abroad, you may be asked to include a CV. Unlike a resume, a CV is more lengthy, often 5-10 pages, and is not customized to a specific position. See an example below:

Im A. Spartan

San Jose, CA 95192 | (408) 555-5555 | imaspartan@gmail.com | linkedin.com/in/imaspartan

EDUCATION

B.A. Political Science, Global Politics Concentration, Minor in Economics

Spring 20XX

San Jose State University, San Jose CA, 3.85 GPA

Study Abroad, Barcelona, Spain

Summer 20XX

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Senior Project: Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, SJSU

Spring 20XX

- Conducted a comparative case study analysis of the public policy implementation in Malawi, Kenya, and Ghana as a response to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals
- Compiled and synthesized research into a 25-page research paper and presented research in a campus-wide poster presentation to over 40 faculty members and political science students

Nuclear Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era, SJSU

Fall 20XX

- Researched the history and progress of nuclear disarmament and compiled over 30 primary sources into a 15-page research paper
- Created a PowerPoint presentation and presented research findings to a class of 30 students

Research Assistant, Professor X, SJSU

Fall 20XX - Spring 20XX

- Developed a 20-page Literature Review Guide for Professor X's Senior Project students
- Assisted in Literature Review research for Dr. X's publications on World Food Politics

Research Assistant, Professor Y, SJSU

Fall 20XX - Spring 20XX

- Conducted database research on comparative factors that influence democracy amongst nations

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant (Intro to International Relations), SJSU

Spring 20XX

- Assisted professor in leading discussions and in classroom management, creating an inclusive and productive learning environment for students
- Graded over 50 midterms and final exams and provided constructive feedback to students to help them learn and improve in the course
- Held office hours for 2 hours weekly to answer student questions and provide guidance on assignments and developing research topics

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Intern California Senate Caucus, Communications Department

Summer 20XX

- Wrote press briefings and articles for the Caucus website on recent events and policy achievements
- Conducted research for California State Senators to inform their policy decisions
- Monitored social media accounts and made weekly posts to increase user base
- Collaborated with campaign team to do precinct walks and make phone calls to potential voters

CV Example (cont'd)

Model United Nations, UC Berkeley

September 20XX - May 20XX

- Served as the Kuwaiti delegate for the OPEC Oil Crisis Historical Committee at the 2015 UC Berkeley Model United Nations Conference
- Sponsored the passing resolution on cholera containment as the Venezuelan representative in the World Health Organization at the 2014 UC Berkeley Model United Nations Conference

Resident Advisor, San Jose State University Housing

June 20XX - May 20XX

- Developed a community of over 70 residents, serving as a role model and student leader in charge of student education, safety and well-being, resource referral, and social justice engagement
- Planned and facilitated weekly programming activities to increase student engagement and enhance the student experience

WORK EXPERIENCE

Waitress, Cheesecake Factory, San Jose, CA

January 20XX - June 20XX

Barista, Starbucks Coffee, San Jose CA

August 20XX - May 20XX

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

House Building in Tijuana, Mexico

Summer 20XX

- Travelled with a group of 40 church members to assemble over 5 houses for low-income families

Food Pantry, SJSU, San Jose, CA

November 20XX - May 20XX

- Volunteered bi-monthly to organize food donations and serve meals to the homeless

AFFILIATIONS

Member, American Political Science Association

August 20XX - May 20XX

Member, Pi Sigma Alpha, San Jose State University

January 20XX - May 20XX

Member, AIESEC, San Jose State University

February 20XX - May 20XX

CONFERENCES

Social Justice Conference, San Jose State University

Spring 20XX

Women in Leadership Conference, San Jose, CA

Fall 20XX

TRAININGS

Introduction to Stata, San Jose State University

Fall 20XX

Social Inclusion and Diversity Training, San Jose State University

Fall 20XX

Sexual Assault Advocate Training, San Jose State University

Fall 20XX

HONORS and AWARDS:

Outstanding Senior Award for San Jose State Political Science Department

Spring 20XX

Resident Assistant (RA) of the Year

Spring 20XX

ABC Academic Scholarship

August 20XX - May 20XX

SKILLS

Computer: Stata, SPSS, Microsoft Office, Google Suite, Wix, Adobe Illustrator

Language: Fluent in English, Conversational Spanish

RESEARCH INTERESTS

International Security/ Terrorism

International Development

Regions: Middle East/North Africa and Eastern Europe

Cover Letter Basics

A cover letter provides the opportunity to introduce:

- Who you are
- Why you want the job/internship
- Why you are uniquely qualified for a position or company

A cover letter may also be called a *letter of intent*, *statement of intent*, *application letter*, or *letter of interest*.

- **Cover letters** include information as to why you are qualified for a specific job listed
- **Letters of intent** explains your interest in applying for a company that does not have a specific job listed

When done well, a cover letter can be a great way to demonstrate your writing skills and personality in a way that separates you from other candidates.

Format

A cover letter can be the body of an email that you send directly to a hiring manager, or a formal document (MS Word, PDF, etc.). See tips on how to determine which is the best in this [“Cover Letter vs. Email”](#) article by The Muse. Regardless of how it’s sent, the content remains the same.

Cover letters are typically 1/2 to 3/4 of a standard US 8.5x11 page long. You can consider this a 3-4 paragraph version of the [5 paragraph essay](#). Below are some tips and examples to get you started.

1. Address Your Document: Make sure that you have an appropriate greeting to your cover letter such as the examples below. See additional greeting tips in this [“Should You Use ‘Dear Hiring Manager’”](#) article by The Muse. (e.g. “Dear Hiring Manager” or “Dear Recruiter”)

2. Introduction and Thesis (1st Paragraph):

- Draw the reader’s attention by starting with a hook. Be creative: what drew you into the company or position? Why are you pursuing a career in this field? For example:

“My last boss once told me that my phone manners could probably diffuse an international hostage situation. I’ve always had a knack for communicating with people—the easygoing and the difficult alike—and I’d love to bring that skill to the office manager position at Shutterstock.”

See more examples here: [“31 Attention Grabbing Cover Letter Examples”](#) by The Muse.

- After the introduction, explain why the organization/position appeals to you and how your skills/experience match the qualifications. For example:

“Shutterstock employees have a strong need for personalized office support and this is something I enjoy providing in the workplace. Because of my strong communication (skill/experience) & leadership skills (skill/experience) I believe I will be a good candidate”.

3. Strong Examples of Qualifications (2nd/3rd Paragraphs): Build on your thesis with one or two key experiences that showcase the skills you identified as your strengths. Each skill identified in your thesis gets its own paragraph. Unlike the quick bullet points in a resume, tell a story. This is your chance to showcase why you are most qualified for the position. For example:

“In my current job, I proactively jumped in to help launch an internal recycling and waste reduction initiative. Together, our team contributed to a 25% reduction in solid waste production within the company.”

“In my role as a sales associate, I am frequently required to provide exceptional customer service on short notice. Exceeding customers’ expectations is a point of personal and professional pride for me, and this is a skill I’m eager to continue developing.”

4. Request for Action (Final Paragraph): Close by summarizing your skills and experience in relation to the job description. Show your interest by making a specific request for an interview. Finally, thank the reader for taking the time to consider your applicaiton. For example,

“I’m excited about the human resources internship at Company ABC and would love to opportunity to meet in person and further discuss the value I can offer as an intern.”

For additional examples, see [“How to Write a Cover Letter”](#) by Indeed.

Cover Letter in Email Body

When sending your cover letter or introductory email directly to a recruiter, you should keep in mind the following tips:

- Follow directions. If the company asks for a cover letter, provide one. If a cover letter is not requested, you can send one but it may not be read.
- Use an informative subject line. If emailing, make sure your message is easy to find by including Your Name, Cover Letter, and Job Title. For example, Sammy Spartan Cover Letter Marketing Assistant.
- Have a short introduction. If you attach your cover letter as a separate document to an email, include a short introduction in the email to let the hiring manager know your resume is attached.
- Keep it concise. The longer a cover letter is, it is less likely to be read thoroughly.

Cover Letter Sample (Formal)

Im A. Spartan
San Jose, CA 95192
imaspartan@gmail.com
(408) 555-5555

Date

Company Name
123 Spartan Way
San Jose, CA 95192

Dear Hiring Manager,

When I was 7 years old, I believed I was a genius because I could read Greek when everyone else was just reading English. While I still have some genius-like moments, I quickly learned that I had dyslexia, and battled this challenge as a student to push through school and graduate from SJSU with a degree in psychology. Because of this, working with youth and helping them manage and overcome their learning disabilities has been a passion of mine. The moment I read your mission of putting youth first, I knew that this would be a place where I could contribute as a behavioral therapist.

Last summer, I was fortunate to have an internship with XXX organization. Through this experience, I was able to observe one-on-one and group therapy sessions with children ages 7 to 12. I practiced my active listening skills while doing intake at the front desk and honed my communication and empathy skills as a therapist. Furthermore, as a part of my senior seminar, I wrote a research paper on the effects of learning disabilities on school age children and their self-confidence. I was given the opportunity to present my paper at the Santa Clara County Office of Education professional development day. This opportunity allowed me to improve my writing, research and analytical skills, as well as my ability to present publicly.

Given my dedication to helping youth with disabilities and strong interpersonal skills, I would love the opportunity to be a part of your team as a behavior therapist. I truly would love to make a difference in these kids' lives and welcome the opportunity to talk with you in person regarding my skills and qualifications. Thank you for considering my application, and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Best,
Im A. Spartan

Cover Letter Sample (Email)

Dear Green Living Manager,

I was referred by my peer, Sammy Spartan, in the Green Living Marketing Department to get in touch with you regarding your current opening as a Communications Assistant. I am a graduating senior from San Jose State University (SJSU) with a degree in Environmental Studies and would love to bring my communications experience and my passion for green living to your team.

In my previous Communication Manager role for Kappa Delta at SJSU, I wrote monthly articles for the national website, and posted weekly on our Instagram account to drive engagement with our 500 members. I received consistent praise from the fraternity counsel for my engaging content, and clear, straightforward writing style. Additionally, I advocated to reduce the number of printed marketing materials we used and instead direct students to our Instagram, which significantly reduced costs and paper waste.

I would love to join your team as a Communications Assistant at Green Living and bring my ideas, work ethic, and writing experience to support your audience. Attached to this email you can find my resume and a copy of this cover letter. I would love the opportunity to further discuss my qualifications with you. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Im A. Spartan
SJSU Grad, B.A. in Environmental Studies
(408) 555-5555
imaspartan@gmail.com

Reference List Basics

Employers may request references in the application or interview process to verify your employment history and learn about your strengths and weaknesses from previous supervisors or co-workers. **Do not provide a reference list until the employer requests one.** Reference List is a separate document and should not be combined with your resume. If you are asked to provide a reference list, use these following tips:



CONTACT INFO

Make sure your contact information is at the top and includes your name, city, contact number, and email address.



ALWAYS ASK

Always ask permission from your references before you use their names. Prepare them by obtaining their current contact information and sharing your resume and job description with them.



WHO CAN BE MY REFERENCE?

References should be individuals who know your work and can vouch for you in a professional matter.

Examples: Current and former supervisors, mentors, advisers.



WHO SHOULD NOT BE MY REFERENCE?

References should not be your family, friends, or peers.

Do not choose people who are not familiar with your professional background or accomplishments.

Ima Spartan

San Jose, CA 95192
408-555-1234
imaspartan@sjsu.edu

REFERENCES

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