

MAKE YOUR CAREER EPIC!

Explore career paths and learn about yourself.

Prepare to market yourself in your field.

Implement your plan through internships, volunteer work, and other field experiences.

Career Launch!

RESUME AND COVER LETTER GUIDE



ACCOUNTING, FINANCE
AND BUSINESS
CAREER COMMUNITY

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Your Career Community

Learn about career paths in Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Entrepreneurship and other Business sectors by engaging in conversations with professors, family, and your peers! The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has developed eight [career readiness competencies](#) which are highly valued by employers.

By joining this community, you will hear from your career coach about events, internships, resources, and advice specifically for your career interests. You will have opportunities to talk with your peers, with your career coach, and learn to connect with employers and alumni from your areas of interest.

To join the **Accounting, Finance and Business Career Community**, click [here](#).

Your Career Coach



Gina Villazhinay

Assistant Director of Career and Professional Development
Dobbs Ferry Campus – Main Hall Room 247A

(914) 674-3043

GVillazhinay@mercy.edu

To make an appointment:

Schedule online: <https://mercy.joinhandshake.com/>

(Log in, Click Career Center (top right), Click Appointments)

Schedule by phone: (914) 674-3043

Schedule in person: Dobbs Ferry Campus – Main Hall 247A

To drop in:

Contact your Career Coach to find out about drop-in hours.

They may vary by semester.

Career Paths

There are various career paths you can pursue with a business-related degree. Analyzing, organizing, and evaluating business functions essential to increase efficiency and production in business operations. There are opportunities available in many companies. A hospital and accounting firms need accountants, auditors, marketing specialists, etc.

Companies usually need employees to work in:

- Administrative Support
- Business Information Management
- General Management
- Human Resources Management
- Operations Management

Once you have a sense of the path you want to pursue, it's time to start preparing to market yourself! This guidebook will take you through two of the most important marketing documents you need: your resume, and your cover letter(s). In addition to using this guide, be sure to attend career events and workshops and/or meet with your career coach to discuss these more in depth. It is never too early to start thinking about your career path.

Resumes

A resume is a job-hunting tool that can help you get an interview, prepare for an interview, and organize information for a potential employer. Your resume introduces you on paper and acts as a personal marketing tool. It can help you differentiate in an application pool. Developing and executing the best documents possible will help to ensure that you put your best foot forward and increase the likelihood of progressing to an interview.

A great resume accomplishes the following:

- Summarizes your educational background, including anything in progress (so don't forget to list your Mercy degree!)
- Lists any career-related requirements for your field that you have completed or are currently completing (e.g., certification, field hours, etc.)
- Clearly displays your professional experiences, including organization, location, years, and any promotions
- Gives examples of how and when you demonstrated high level skills (through your accomplishment statements)
- Demonstrates any leadership and teamwork experience you have
- Lists any computer, language, and other concrete skills that are important to your field, or are important to share
- Is formatted cleanly and easy to scan quickly

This section contains helpful tips and formats to help you design and write a resume that showcases your unique combination of experiences. (Note: the resumes discussed in this guidebook are job-focused resumes. At some point, if you apply to a graduate program, you may be asked for a similar document called a Curriculum Vitae, or CV. This is a similar, but slightly different, type of document and we recommend reaching out to your career coach for assistance in formulating your CV.)

In order to apply to positions listed in Handshake, you first need to upload your resume, and have it approved by your PACT Mentor or Career Coach. To have your resume approved, it must meet all of the specifications in this guidebook, and follow Mercy Format.

RESUME DO'S

Use this checklist to make sure your resume is formatted properly:

- Resume is maximum one page (with a few exceptions).
- Resume is proofread for spelling and grammar – one mistake could cost you the job!
- Experiences are listed in reverse chronological order (most recent to least recent) in each section.
- Font size and typeface are consistent (except for name size).
- Font size is between 10pt and 12pt, with name in size 16pt and bold.
- Margins are consistent on all sides, and between 0.5" and 1."
- All dates are aligned far right and spelled out (including months).
- Bullets are formatted using strong verbs in the correct tense (present tense for current positions, past tense for previous positions).
- All text is written directly in the document – there are no headers or footers, tables, columns, or text boxes (your resume won't make it through an Applicant Tracking System with these).
- Under Education: formal degree is title spelled out (e.g, Bachelor of Science – not B.S.).
- Under Education: graduation date is listed (e.g., Expected May 2020) – not dates of attendance.
- Under Experience, Volunteer, Activities, etc.: dates are included (start and finish) for each listing.
- Under Skills: you have included each program or language and level of proficiency.

RESUME DON'TS

Use this checklist to make sure you haven't made these common resume mistakes!

- Don't include an Objective. They are technically allowed on your resume, but based on our employer feedback we don't recommend one. Your objective is to land an interview for that position!
- Don't let your resume exceed one page, and don't use tiny font or margins to make it fit.
- Don't use an illegible font (stick with something easy to read - avoid Curlz MT).
- Don't use elaborate or unconventional formatting, designs, colors, or symbols – they make your resume stand out, but in a negative way.
- Don't use full sentences; employers won't read them. The first time they see your resume, they scan it for 5-7 seconds.
- Don't include "I" but still write in the first person, and make sure you use the correct tense.
- Don't include an unprofessional email address. Just use your name (and numbers) if necessary. Your mercy.edu email is perfect, but make sure you check it frequently!
- Don't overload your resume with jargon.
- Don't list your hobbies. Hiring managers only care about what you can do for their organization.
- Don't include any unnecessary personal information like height, weight, marital status, religion, photo, or social security number.
- Don't include references, or a line that says "references available upon request." This is understood.

RESUME SECTIONS

HEADING	This is at the very top of your resume, and includes your name, phone number, email address, location (city and state), and links to any professional sites you want to share, such as your LinkedIn profile.
EDUCATION	You should at least include Mercy College. You can also include any prior institutions that you transferred from. You may include your high school until you are a Sophomore in college. If your GPA is 3.0 or over, you are encouraged (but not required) to list it on your resume to advertise your achievement.
SKILLS	This is usually at the bottom of your resume. List computer skills, languages, and any other hard skills you'd like to advertise (such as laboratory skills). Soft skills, such as teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal skills, should not be listed in this section. Instead, you will demonstrate these through your accomplishment bullets, and you can discuss them in your cover letters and interviews.
EXPERIENCE	Also sometimes listed as Professional Experience or Work Experience. These positions are usually paid, but could also include internships or other unpaid experiences that are directly applicable to your field. List the organization, location (city, state), your title, your dates of work, and a few accomplishment statements as bullet points that describe what kind of work you contributed and what kinds of skills you used. Whenever possible, show measurable results or quantify your work.
VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE	List any recent or relevant volunteer work you've done. You can format this section exactly like your "Experience" section, or you can simply list each experience on one line, without bullets.
ACTIVITIES	List any clubs, athletic teams, or similar co-curricular activities you've participated in. If these are very relevant to your career path, you can format them exactly like your "Experience" section. Otherwise, simply list each activity on one line to save space.
HONORS AND AWARDS	List any academic awards (such as Dean's List or departmental awards), notable scholarships, or other awards you've received outside of school (e.g., Employee of the Month).
RELEVANT COURSEWORK	You might decide to include relevant coursework if you don't have enough experiences to fill out your resume yet, or if you want to make sure an employer knows about some specific courses you've taken. This section would fall under Education, either as a sub-heading in that section, or with a heading of its own.
LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS	If you are pursuing a licensed or certified profession, this section will ultimately be at the top of your resume when you are close to earning that credential. In the meantime, if you hold other certifications (e.g., CPR or First Aid) you can list them in this section.
PROFESSIONAL PROFILE	Also known as a Summary. Used only by experienced professionals to further summarize their relevant skills and implement higher level key words. If included, this would be the first section of your resume, right under your Heading.

ACTION VERBS

Each bullet on your resume should begin with a strong verb that indicates the skill you used in that accomplishment. Below are some verbs to help you write strong bullet points:

Management	Communication	Clerical	Finance/Tax	Creative
administer analyze assign attain chair contract consolidate coordinate delegate develop direct evaluate execute improve increase organize oversee plan prioritize produce recommend review schedule strengthen supervise	address arbitrate author correspond develop direct draft edit enlist formulate influence interpret lecture mediate moderate motivate negotiate persuade promote publicize reconcile recruit speak translate write	approve arrange catalogue classify collect compile dispatch execute generate implement inspect monitor operate organize prepare process purchase record retrieve screen systematize tabulate validate	audited arranged classified collected equalized diagnosed dispensed halted investigated lowered maintained minimized recognized	act conceptualize create design develop direct establish fashion found illustrate institute integrate introduce invent originate perform plan revitalize shape

Helping	Technical	Teaching	Financial
assess assist clarify coach counsel demonstrate diagnose educate expedite facilitate familiarize guide refer rehabilitate represent	assemble build calculate compute design devise engineer fabricate maintain operate overhaul program remodel repair solve train upgrade	adapt advise clarify coach communicate coordinate develop enable encourage evaluate explain facilitate guide inform initiate instruct persuade set goals stimulate	administer allocate analyze appraise audit balance budget calculate compute develop forecast manage market plan project research

SAMPLE BULLETS

Some positions are very common jobs for people to take, especially early on, as part time jobs or resume builders. If you've held one of those jobs, we've developed some bullet points for you to use – but be sure to edit them if they don't completely describe your own experiences. You can also use these bullets as examples of how to write your own accomplishment statements for these and other positions.

Babysitter

- Oversee and care for children in the nonattendance of parents at employer's home
- Maintain a healthy and safe environment for children
- Organize and participate in activities such as games, crafts, reading and outings
- Prepare daily meals for family members
- Transport children to and from activities
- Supervise homework to ensure it is complete

Cashier

- Handle financial transactions between guests and company
- Advise customers on purchases and provide excellent customer service
- Developed reputation for prompt, efficient service with high level of accuracy
- Maintain thorough knowledge of store merchandise
- Count money in cash drawers at the beginning of shifts to ensure adequate change
- Ensure customers are satisfied with order and transaction

Lifeguard

- Led group swimming lessons for children ages X-X, and provided instruction and support for beginning and intermediate swimmers
- Upheld the pool's safety standards, preventing swimming accidents through vigilant supervision
- Provided first aid care for on-site injuries
- Implemented the latest methods in lifeguarding and water safety techniques

Camp Counselor

- Designed and planned camp activities for children ages 8-12
- Implemented daily schedule, and directed and supervised children in planned activities
- Ensured safety, personal care and discipline of children
- Instructed campers regarding (insert activities here)
- Demonstrated use of camp equipment to campers
- Monitored daily arrival and departure of campers

Bookkeeper / Administrative Assistant

- Processed payroll weekly for employees
- Audit billing process for clients
- Ensure all transactions are recorded properly in QuickBooks
- Managed monthly payroll for 50 employees, at approximately \$9000 per month
- Maintained data on various programs in Excel
- Managed office communications and traffic flow including phones, email, visitors and guests

Tutor

- Instruct students in various mathematics courses
- Teach students about proper study habits and support resources available on campus
- Assist students with organizational skills and time management
- Designed lesson plans to ensure students' academic growth and comprehension

Sales Associate

- Assisted customers in the selection of clothes and accessories
- Managed inventory to optimize space
- Organized displays to showcase current store inventory

Marketing Intern

- Promote new products to Dobbs Ferry community, get feedback and record results
- Compile list of podcasts and related businesses to build and establish connections with client
- Attend biweekly meetings to discuss new products and marketing projects

ACTIVITIES

Club XYZ – President

- Planned and executed events to increase awareness for club cause
- Created marketing materials to advertise for club events
- Recruited new club members via social media outreach
- Participated in fundraisers for Relay for Life

Club XYZ – Secretary

- Transcribed and distributed bi-weekly meeting minutes
- Monitored and recorded member attendance
- Assisted Club President with creating marketing materials for club events
- Ensured organization of all club materials and files
- Maintained club and member calendar

Club XYZ – Member

- Participated in club meetings and provided ideas for fundraising efforts

Accounting, Finance and Business Career Community – Student Advisor

- Attended biweekly meetings and provided ideas to help increase attendance at Career Fairs, career workshops, alumni events, etc.
- Assisted in planning networking events to help connect student with alumni
- Increase internship awareness by discussing career resources available to students

MERCY FORMAT & RESUME SAMPLES

Based on our collective experiences hiring, working with employers, and learning from industry professionals, the CPD team has put together a Mercy Format that we believe will help you put your best foot forward when it comes to your resume. We strongly encourage you to use this, and not any of the templates you can find online or in Word. Only resumes in Mercy Format will be approved for use in Handshake. If you want to use a different format, consult your career coach first! On the following pages are some samples in Mercy Format to help you create or update your resume. Remember to remove the “sample” banner from the top left corner for your own use.

First Name Last Name

Dobbs Ferry, NY | (914) 123-4567 | firstname.lastname@mercy.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Specialization in Marketing

Expected May 20xx

- GPA: 3.4
- **Relevant Coursework:** Principles of Management, Digital Marketing, Advertising, Marketing Management

Dobbs Ferry High School, Dobbs Ferry, NY

June 2018

High School Diploma

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Campus Pursuit, New York, NY

January 2016 - May 2016

Marketing Intern, Community Outreach Team, Sales Team

- Worked closely with Marketing Team and reported to co-founder
- Created content for student ambassador internships
- Collaborated with Marketing team to generate ideas, leverage resources, and share information to create an effective ambassador search process
- Conducted research on events, schools, job fairs, social media, and other worthwhile recruiting endeavors

First Day Films, Northport, NY

Summer Internship, Social Media Manager

Start Month Year – End Month Year

- Prepared wedding videos for clients using Final Cut Pro
- Built and edited a WordPress website to increase website traffic
- Created original content for various social media outlets

Ann Taylor, Jefferson Valley, NY

Start Month Year – End Month Year

Macy's, New York, NY

Summers 20xx –20xx

Sales Associate

- Assisted customers in the selection of clothes and accessories
- Handled financial transactions between customers and company
- Managed inventory to optimize space
- Organized displays to showcase current store inventory

PROJECTS

NBCUniversal News Group Marketing Consultation

Fall 2xxx

- Conducted and analyzed market research on millennial news consumption, then created a responsive plan and presented it to the marketing team

SKILLS

- **Computer:** Proficient Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SMART Board, SSPS,
- **Language:** Fluent in English and Spanish

First Name Last Name

Yorktown Heights, NY
(123) 456-7890
Jmaverick@mercy.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Specialization in Marketing Expected May 20xx

- GPA: 3.4
- **Relevant Coursework:** Principles of Management, Digital Marketing, Advertising, Marketing Management

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Campus Pursuit, New York, NY

January 2016 - May 2016

Marketing Intern, Community Outreach Team, Sales Team

- Worked closely with Marketing Team and reported to co-founder
- Created content for student ambassador internships
- Collaborated with Marketing team to generate ideas, leverage resources, and share information to create an effective ambassador search process
- Conducted research on events, schools, job fairs, social media, and other worthwhile recruiting endeavors

Starbucks, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Crew Member

Start Month Year – End Month Year

- Operated and reconciled cash drawers
- Created excellent customer relations and loyalty through friendly interactions and communications
- Organized, cleaned and restocked product display shelves

Ann Taylor, Jefferson Valley, NY

Start Month Year – End Month Year

Macy's, New York, NY

Summers 20xx –20xx

Sales Associate

- Assisted customers in the selection of clothes and accessories
- Handled financial transactions between customers and company
- Managed inventory to optimize space
- Organized displays to showcase current store inventory

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Accounting, Finance and Business Advisory Board, Mercy College, NY

Start Month Year – End Month Year

Marketing Chair

- Advise the Board and CPD regarding communication strategies to reach the Career Community, and to recruit students to join the Career Community
- Collaborate with Event Chair to best market events and programming

Women's Leadership Institute, Mercy College, NY

Start Month Year – End Month Year

Member

- Participate in club meetings and contribute efforts towards fundraising ideas
- Promote and assist in increasing student engagement in events instituted by the club

SKILLS

- **Computer:** Proficient Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, SMART Board, SSPS
- **Language:** Fluent in English and Spanish

First Name Last Name
Tarrytown, NY |(123) 456-7890| jmaverick@mercy.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY Expected May 20xx
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Data Analytics

- GPA: 3.46
- **Relevant Courses:** Relevant Coursework: Statistical Apps for Business Decision Making, Principles of Management, Introduction to Financial Accounting, Business Report/Writing and Presentation

RELATED EXPERIENCE

IBM, Armonk, NY Start Month Year – Present
Financial Analyst

- Create and pilot a “Candidate Attraction” plan and process to be used in recruiting at 53 colleges and universities for the Finance & Operations organization
- Run monthly education sessions for new communication technology with managers and teams
- Organize 3-4 executive round tables and “lunch and learns” for new hires, co-ops, and interns monthly

Eileen Fisher LifeWorks, Irvington, NY Start Month Year – End Month Year
Intern

- Aided in facilitating workshops and events with 15-150 attendees
- Assisted the Director of Operations for LifeWorks with 3-4 workshops per month

Sider Road Group of Companies, Dobbs Ferry, NY Start Month Year – End Month Year
Intern/Assistant

- Increased interaction 13% across four social media accounts through managing and curating content
- Contacted potential clients at Fortune 500s, conferences, and universities

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY Start Month Year – End Month Year
Student Worker, Career and Professional Development

- Assist with all aspects of day to day operation of busy office
- Handle phones and schedule appointments for interdepartmental operation
- Act as receptionist in the absence of administrative assistant
- Assist with and attend Career Fairs and other special events
- Post information to appropriate online sites, these may include job listings etc.
- Assist students to book appointments with appropriate staff; interface with faculty and staff

LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

Delta Mu Delta International Business Honor Society, Dobbs Ferry, NY Start Month Year – End Month Year
Member, Beta Upsilon Chapter - Mercy College

National Society of Collegiate Scholars, Dobbs Ferry, NY Start Month Year – End Month Year
Member, Mercy College Chapter

SKILLS

- Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint

John Maverick

123 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10598 • (123) 456-7894 • jmaverick@mercy.edu • www.linkedin.com/in/john-maverick

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Master of Science in Public Accounting (150-Credit Ready)

Bachelor of Science in Public Accounting

- Overall GPA: 3.7; Major GPA: 3.5
- Graduated Cum Laude

Expected February 2021

May 2019

EXPERIENCE

Greyrock Accounting Systems, Shrub Oak, NY

Staff Accountant

September 2017 – Present

- Assist accounting manager with processing and categorizing client expense and bank statement data
- Accumulate and summarize client sales data in Excel spreadsheet in order to compute sales tax liability
- Prepare sales and payroll taxes for roughly sixteen clients
- Prepare client profit and loss reports for partner review

Company Name, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Front Desk Coordinator

September 2015 – January 2017

- Welcomed and interacted with clients for this personal services hair salon
- Scheduled client appointments and provided check-out and cashier services
- Organized retail area and displayed salon products
- Maintained close communications with salon personnel in servicing their clients

Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla NY

Administrative Assistant

October 2015 – August 2016

- Interacted with physicians and nurses to service patients in this high-volume pediatric practice
- Organized patient medical forms and populated patient data on those forms
- Provided reception and other front desk administrative support
- Processed patient co-payments and other cash receipts

LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

Mercy College Accounting Society, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Member

May 2017 – Present

- Attend and participate in various professional development and firm networking events
- Participate in Society volunteer activities

New York State Society of CPAs (NYSSCPA), New York, NY

Student Associate Member (Membership application in process)

November 2019 – Present

Volunteer New York, New York, NY

Treasurer

January 2019 – Present

- Process donations from parishioners
- Summarize and enter donation receipts into QuickBooks software
- Endorse donation checks and prepare deposit slip for bank deposit

OTHER SKILLS

- *Computer*: Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, and Excel), QuickBooks, Dillner's Accounting Software
- *Language*: Bilingual in Spanish and English

First Name Last Name

Town, NY 10000

(123) 456-7890

jmaverick@mercy.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY
Bachelor of Science in Health Science

Expected May 20xx

Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY
Associate of Science in Health Studies

December 20xx

EXPERIENCE

White Plains Hospital, White Plains, NY
Volunteer

January 2018 – Present

- Observe health professionals during their everyday routines
- Assist in sterilizing and resetting exam rooms
- Input data into electronic medical records software to assist with accurate billing and patient tracking
- Escort patients and visitors/guests throughout hospital

Athlete's Warehouse, Pleasantville, NY
Strength & Conditioning Intern

September 2016 – December 2016

- Administered treatment for athletes under the direction of a Certified Athletic Trainer
- Reported athlete progress to supervisor on a weekly basis
- Collaborated with professionals to determine treatment plans
- Designed core strength, rehabilitation, and conditioning programs
- Performed fitness evaluations and orientations

Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY
Office Assistant, Registrar's Office

February 2015 – May 2016

- Greeted students to busy office
- Answered phones and directed calls appropriately
- Performed heavy data entry and managed physical student files, maintaining high level of confidentiality
- Provided basic information about registration deadlines, classroom locations, and office hours to students
- Assisted at registration events, such as Orientation

ACTIVITIES

Member, Pre-Health Professions Club, Mercy College

Spring 2017 – Present

Member, Exercise Science Club, Mercy College

Spring 2017 – Present

Member, Medical Professionals Club, Westchester Community College

Fall 2015 – Fall 2016

SKILLS

Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint

Language: Fluent Spanish

First Name Last Name

City, State | (917) 555-2222 | firstname.lastname@mercy.edu

SUMMARY (optional)

- Detail-oriented, efficient and organized professional with extensive experience in accounting systems
- Possess strong analytical and problem solving skills, with the ability to make well thought out decisions
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Highly trustworthy, discreet and ethical
- Resourceful in the completion of projects, effective at multi-tasking

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Glen Dara Construction Co., New York, NY

May 2000 – Present

Accounting Assistant

- Performed accounts payable functions for construction expenses
- Managed vendor accounts, generating weekly on demand cheques
- Managed financial departments with responsibility for Budgets, Forecasting, Payroll, Accounts Payable and Receivable
- Created budgets and forecasts for the management group
- Ensured compliance with accounting deadlines
- Prepared company accounts and tax returns for audit
- Coordinated monthly payroll functions for 200+ employees
- Liaised with bankers, insurers and solicitors regarding financial transactions

Stonepark Web Design Inc., Tarrytown, NY

May 20xx – August 20xx

Accounting Assistant

- Managed accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll departments.
- Generated budgets and forecasts on a quarterly basis and presented to the management team.
- Reported on variances in quarterly costing reports.
- Prepared annual company accounts and reports.
- Administered online banking functions.
- Reduced credit period from 90 days to 60 days
- Managed payroll function for 140 employees

Lancer Industries, New York, NY

May 20xx – April 20xx

Administrative Assistant

- Performed general office duties and administrative tasks.
- Prepared weekly confidential sales reports for presentation to management.
- Managed the internal and external mail functions.
- Provided telephone support.
- Scheduled client appointments and maintained up-to-date confidential client files.

SKILLS

- Proficient in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access) and Mac Operating Systems; Proficient in SMART Board technology
- *Language:* Bilingual English and Spanish

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Master of Science in Business Administration, GPA: X.Y

May 20xx

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

January 20xx



Cover Letters

When you have the option of speaking with a potential employer in person, at a career fair for example, you have a chance to talk with them about your background, strengths, career goals, and interests with their organization. When you apply online, or through another method that is not face-to-face, you instead need to write a letter that conveys that information. This accompanies your resume, and is known as a cover letter.

Some positions will require a cover letter as part of the application. However, even if a cover letter is not a requirement, we strongly recommend that you write one anyway. Cover letters show that you have carefully considered the position and determined how you would be a strong candidate. They also provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your writing skills, which are necessary in any profession.

A great cover letter accomplishes the following:

- Identifies the exact position you're applying for
- Summarizes your strengths and experiences that are *relevant to the job description*
- Gives examples of how / when you developed or demonstrated those particular skills
- Explains why you are interested in that particular organization or position (demonstrating a deep understanding of the job description and some additional research of your own)
- Helps the hiring manager understand how this position fits into your short term and long term career plan
- Identifies specific people who are acting as a referral into the position (if that's the case)
- Alleviates any concerns or red flags that you think they might have when reading your resume

COVER LETTER FORMATTING

Cover letters are written in a business letter format. Use this checklist to make sure your letter is formatted properly:

- Use the same heading (name and contact information), font, and margins as your resume to maintain a consistent look in your documents.
- Align the entire letter flush left – do not indent any lines.
- Write out the date (month, day, year) at the top left.
- Write out the full street address of the company (even though you will likely not be mailing it), including the name and title of a specific person, if the job description lists someone. You may have to research the address if it is not included in the job description.
- Address your letter to the specified contact. If you do not have a contact name, use something like “Dear Hiring Manager” or “Dear Hiring Committee.” Do not use “To whom it may concern,” as this is outdated and impersonal.
- Write your content, referring to the qualifications in the job description. Do not exceed one page. The standard cover letter is broken into 3 paragraphs, but use whatever paragraph structure makes the most sense for your letter.
- “Sign” your letter with your full name (this may be typed rather than signed in pen).

COVER LETTER TIPS

- **Write a new letter every time.** This adds time to every application, but it is worth it. If you copy and paste a cover letter, or use *Save As* to use an old letter as a template, it will be obvious to a hiring manager that you did not write the letter to them specifically. Even if you change the pieces that you think are important, it's clear when you try to fit a previous cover letter to a new position. And, in the worst case scenario, you might forget to change all instances of the organization name or position title, and your application will not be considered.
- **Tell your story.** Writing your letter is more than using a template and dropping in your skills, work history, and the name of the company. All of those elements should be included, but they should be presented in a cohesive letter that helps the employer understand where you are in your career path, where you plan to go, and how this position fits into that plan.

Employer Insight → When you are applying to an internship or job, employers may have a few things in mind:

- *Will this applicant make the most of the experience?*
For internships, employers often disrupt their daily operations to teach you, so they want someone who will learn a lot and represent them positively when they eventually move on to something else. In the case of a full time job, employers want someone who will enthusiastically contribute to their position (and maybe beyond), so they want a motivated team player.
 - *Will this applicant contribute meaningfully to my team / projects?*
Whether you're in an internship or a full time position, employers want to feel confident that the time, energy, and money they invest in training and supporting you will be worthwhile and that you will make a meaningful impact.
 - *Could this applicant eventually work for me full time / will this applicant stick around?*
A job offer is *never* a guarantee after an internship, but some employers hire interns with the intent to observe and assess them for potential full time opportunities. And, even if that is not their original intention, interns who perform very well are often considered for full time jobs – at graduation, or in the future. In the case of a full time job, a potential employer wants to feel confident that you will stay in this job for a while, and not cause them to go through another hiring process very soon.
- **Don't overshare.** There is a very fine line between *genuine* and *too personal*. You do want to be honest during the hiring process, but you don't have to tell an employer everything. Leave out information about your family, hobbies, health, etc. In addition to being unnecessary, an employer might find it unprofessional of you to share those details. And, there are also certain subjects that you avoid to protect yourself from illegal discrimination.

MERCY FORMAT & COVER LETTER SAMPLES

On the following pages are some samples in Mercy Format to give you an idea of how to formulate your cover letters. Cover letters do not need to be approved for use in Handshake, but you are strongly encouraged to have at least your first letter reviewed by your career coach to make sure you are on the right track!

First Name Last Name

Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

(123) 456-7890

Abcdefg@mercy.edu

Date

Contact Name (if available)

Contact Title (if available)

Contact Department (if available)

Company / Organization Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (Mr. / Ms. / Dr. Last Name) OR (Hiring Manager),

First paragraph: (Be clear as to which role you are applying for, and grab his/her attention)

Name the position for which you are applying and tell the employer how you became aware of it. Make an introductory statement about why you would be a good fit for this position, or why it interests you. You may choose to explain why you were attracted to this particular organization / position, briefly explain why you are seeking this kind of a position now, or point out why your academics, skills, and/or experience make you a good candidate. If someone specific referred you to this position, mention that in this paragraph. If the position requires something specific or unusual, such as relocation or strict availability, acknowledge this up front so the employer knows that you read the description thoroughly and meet the requirements.

Second paragraph: (Keep his/her attention.....)

Indicate what you can do for the employer based on his/her needs. Don't restate your resume; refer to specific skills and traits outlined in the job description. Give specific examples of experiences you've had, such as, internships, part-time jobs, academic projects, and activities, demonstrate your related skill set. If you have qualifications that are not noted on your resume, this is your opportunity to discuss them.

Third paragraph: (Close with next steps and thank you)

If you haven't yet, explain what attracted you to this particular organization / position. Demonstrate some research beyond the job description to show your enthusiastic interest. Then, refer the reader to an included resume or additional requested materials (such as references and portfolio/writing samples). Let the reader know that you would appreciate an opportunity to discuss the position further (this is how you politely ask for an interview) and thank the employer for their consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name Typed

First Name Last Name

Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

(123) 456-7890

JMaverick@mercy.edu

April 20, 20xx

Ms/Mr. Jane Doe
Director of Human Resources
ABC Company
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10701

Dear Ms/Mr. Doe:

I am writing to you regarding the marketing role that opened up recently. I came across the job description on [Website Name], and was delighted to find that my academic accomplishments meet all of the necessary requirements. I am seeking a challenging but rewarding internship, which is why I was drawn to this exciting opportunity.

As a junior marketing student at Mercy College, I have acquired skills in advertising, PR, product development, and market research. Currently I hold a 3.8 GPA and have been on the Dean’s List every semester.

Throughout my coursework, I designed a marketing campaign for a local pet grooming business that yielded the highest return on investment based on a budget. The campaign had positive feedback and well received that I was awarded third place in Mercy College’s School of Business plan competition.

I would be delighted to have an opportunity to personally interview with you. Please accept the enclosed resume and feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Your Name

Enclosed

First Name Last Name
123 University Avenue
Bronx, NY 10453
914-123-3457

firstname.lastname@email.edu

April 20, 20xx

Ms/Mr. Jane Doe
Director of Human Resources
ABC Company
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10701

Dear Ms/Mr. Doe:

I am writing to express interest in the Communications Coordinator position at the ABC Company. I understand that this is a multifaceted opportunity and I believe my prior experience handling both social media and administrative duties qualifies me for the responsibilities of the job. My communication skills coupled with my ability to balance individual responsibilities with teamwork not only make me an ideal candidate for this position, but also member of this forward-thinking organization.

My written and verbal communication skillset is a valuable strength that I would bring to the Communications Coordinator position. My prior internship and leadership experiences have afforded me the knowledge of how to effectively communicate with peers and supervisors alike, as these roles demanded open and efficient dialogues. In my internship at Marks Paneth, I met with my coworkers and supervisors only once a week, which made it necessary to prepare ideas, concerns, and questions ahead of time. I learned how to express what I needed to discuss in a concise manner and how to follow up with additional thoughts through email correspondence afterwards. Despite the limited amount of time I had face to face with my coworkers, we successfully completed many projects throughout the school year due to our continuous dialogues.

My confidence in my communication skills makes me a viable candidate for this job because it transfers over to my ability to work well on my own and with a team. My Communication coursework at Mercy College involved several group projects that strengthened my ability to delegate responsibility and work separately. At the end of these projects, my partners and I delivered final products that were cohesive despite being comprised of several individual components. I further developed this ability during my internship at Lincoln Financial when I worked on a group intern project. My coworkers and I divided the initial round of work, but once the framework of the project was established we met frequently to share our opinions and piece the final deliverable together as a whole. This project is just one example of a time when I fostered positive working relationships with my coworkers due to open communication and diligence. I enjoy discussing ideas with others but feel confident in my ability to handle responsibilities independently, and I would bring these traits to the team at ABC Company.

As a recent graduate, I possess the skills, maturity, and enthusiasm necessary for the Communications Coordinator position. I am excited about the possibility of joining ABC Company. Thank you for your time and consideration, I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,
Your Name

First Name Last Name

1000 Sample Avenue

Anywhere, NY 10222

phone number

email address

References

Name

Title

Company/Address

Phone

Email

Name

Title

Company/Address

Phone

Email

Name

Title

Company/Address

Phone

Email



DF Campus
BX Campus
MT Campus
NR Campus



CPD@mercy.edu



914.674.7203



Handshake
www.mercy.joinhandshake.com