

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



**PUBLIC SERVICE, LAW
AND GOVERNMENT
CAREER COMMUNITY**



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Your Career Community

Are you passionate about helping others and interested in Government, Law and Public Service? Looking for opportunities to serve in your community or in government? Could you see yourself working in policy making, advocacy, education, government or in a private law firm? Would you like to assist others or society to learn about government jobs, internships as well as opportunities in other related industries

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 **Public Service, Law and Government** Career Community, click [here](#).

Your Career Coach



Marguerite Buseti, Associate Director
718-678-8808
mbusetti@mercy.edu

To make an appointment:

Schedule online: <https://mercy.joinhandshake.com/>
(Log in, Click Career Center (top right), Click Appointments)

Schedule by phone: (718) 678 - 8808
Schedule in person: Bronx Campus – 215B



Career Paths

There are many possibilities in Public Service, Law and Government! Below are some options to consider (if you want to explore possible career paths within your areas of interest

This list is not comprehensive it is meant to inspire you to think outside the box. You should always make an appointment to discuss any path you want to pursue.

Use the titles below to help you start some research using tools like Focus 2 or the Occupational Outlook Handbook, USA Jobs. Gov. Indeed. com and many, many more. You can also search job postings for existing openings with those titles to get a realistic view of the responsibilities and requirements of each position. Some of these titles may require an additional degree or certification beyond the bachelor’s degree.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Arbitrators | Urban Centers | Firefighters |
| Probation and Parole Officers | Employee Assistant Programs | Fire |
| Investigators | Private Practice | Inspectors |
| Correctional Officers | Court Officers | Family and Children’s Services |
| Paralegals and Legal Assistants | Police and Detectives | Academia and Education |
| Lawyers | Private Detectives | Research and Social Services |
| Judges and Hearing Officers | Mediators | Public Defenders |
| Patient Advocate | Conciliators | Political Offices and Campaigns |
| Patient Navigator | Court | Public Policy & NGOs |
| Performance Coach | Reporters | |
| | Bailiffs | |

In addition, remember that Law, Business and related nonprofits usually need employees to work in:

- Community Education Administrative / Support Staff
- International Relations and Diplomacy
- Law Enforcement and Security
- Cybersecurity, Information Technology
- Corporate and Homeland Security
- Military
- Human Resources
- Contractual Agreements in Business, Entertainment, Government and Health Care industries
- Marketing, Accounting and Finance
- Programming
- Research

Sometimes the Public Service, Law and Government part of your job may be reflected in the type of organization you work for, and not necessarily the work that you do!

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!



Resumes

Your resume is your primary marketing document. It summarizes your experiences and skill sets in a simple, easy-to-read format that employers can quickly browse to assess your qualifications for a position. The main goal of your resume is to land you an interview for a job, internship, or volunteer position. Most of the time, you will submit your resume to an employer for a specific position that you see listed online or hear about from someone you know. Sometimes, you might be asked to share your resume for networking purposes or in case a position opens up later.

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. 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	Research	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	clarify collect critique diagnose evaluate examine extract identify inspect interpret interview investigate organize review summarize survey systematize	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 that amounts are correct and that there is adequate change
- Bag, box, and gift-wrap merchandise
- 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

Restaurant Server

- Present menu to patrons and answer questions about menu items
- Provide customers with a pleasant dining experience and quality service
- Conduct final check of food items prior to serving customers to ensure quality maintenance
- Prepare checks and collect customer payments
- Clean all work areas, equipment, utensils, dishes and silverware and ensure they are stored appropriately in accordance with state law

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

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

Town, NY 10000

(123) 456-7890

jmaverick@mercy.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies

Expected May 2021

Middle Village High School, Middle Village, NY

High School Diploma

May 2017

HONORS AND AWARDS

Member, National Honor Society

2015 - 2017

EXPERIENCE

Bayside Seafood Restaurant, Bayside, NY

Wait Staff

May 2017 - Present

- Oversee and maintain dining room seating 100 people
- Organize and participate in structuring of seasonal menus
- Supervise new wait staff and busboys; cut wait time for initial service
- Attend monthly meetings and contribute ideas for service management

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

Boys Club, Bayside, NY

Volunteer Coach

July 2017 - Present

- Collaborate with staff volunteers to work on athletics with local kids during the summer
- Coach kids on fairness in sports; implement intracommunity competitions in soft ball and basketball

Relay for Life, Valley Stream High School

Participant

2014 - 2017

- Raised money, recruited volunteers and helped coordinate annual event at school

SKILLS:

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Language: Conversational Spanish

First Name Last Name

Bronx, NY 10000
(123) 456-7890
Abcdefg@mercy.edu

Education

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice *GPA: 3.40* *Expected May 2020*

Experience

Securitas, Bronx, NY
Front Desk/Security Staff, The Langley Club, City Island, NY *June 2016 – Present*

- Check members and log their information into Excel data base
- Conduct safety/security checks regularly during the tour
- Work with administration on safety issues; interact with members of the community
- Attend safety and security updates with Langley Staff and Securitas

Girl’s and Boy’s Club of Westchester, Elmsford, NY
Counselor *Summer 2015*

- Designed and planned camp activities for pre-teens, ages 8-12
- Implemented daily schedule, directed and supervised planned activities
- Supervised two Counselors in Training

Counselor in Training *Summers 2013, 2014*

- Partnered with fellow Counselor in Training to supervise campers ages 8-12
- Ensured safety, care and discipline of children
- Monitored daily arrival and departure of campers

Leadership & Activities

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY
Criminal Justice Club, Bronx Campus *Spring 2017 – Present*

- Assist with planning and executing speaker’s events and fund raising events

Member, Women’s Soccer Team at Mercy College *Fall 2016 – Present*

- Member of NCAA Division II team
- ECC Championship winners 2016, 2017

Skills:

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

Language: Intermediate Spanish; Basic Italian and Arabic

First Name Last Name

Town, NY 10000
(123) 456-7890
jmaverick@merc.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY Expected May 2019
Bachelor of Arts, International Relations and Diplomacy GPA: 3.64

Relevant Courses: *International Security: Risks, Crisis and Conflict, International Business*

RELATED EXPERIENCE

United Nations (Volunteer Guide), New York, NY January 2018 – Present
Intern

- Attend training sessions and assist the Director of Volunteers with administrative tasks
- Assist new volunteers to learn important locations and names of staff and administrators
- Input data into electronic record keeping software to assist with accurate visitor and member counts
- Escort and guide visitors to meetings and events as instructed by the director

International Association of Business Communicators, New York, NY September 2017– December 2017
Intern

- Worked with the Associate Director to maintain a client data base; perform administrative tasks
- Composed brief updates for Communicators Newsletter weekly
- Collaborated with professionals on planning upcoming events to determine treatment plans
- Assisted in the design of marketing plans for major events; interacted with clients and the public

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY Spring 2016 – Present
Student Worker, Career and Professional Development, Manhattan Campus

- Assist with all aspects of day to day operation of busy office
- Handle calls 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
- Assist students to book appointments with appropriate staff; interface with faculty and staff

ACTIVITIES

Member, Pre-Law Professions Club Fall 2016 – Present
Member, Literacy Volunteer Fall 2016 – Present
Member, Divas Have Mercy Step Team Spring 2016 – Present

SKILLS

Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, speak and write Spanish, Japanese and Arabic fluently

First Name Last Name

New York, NY 11210 ▪ (123) 456-7890 ▪ xyz@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies, minor: Criminal Justice GPA: 3.6 Expected May 2018

- Dean's List – Fall Semester 2017
- Honor's Program in Legal Studies

EXPERIENCE

US District Court, Southern District of New York, New York, NY October 2016-January 2017

Office Aide (Intern) Judge Hardy and Records Management Office

- Organized and maintained filing system for attorney's civil and criminal court cases
- Prepared courtroom for hearings and conferences while interacting with Judge Hardy and Chambers' staff daily
- Researched numerous documents related to civil and criminal court cases on CM ECF, docketed each document

Clerk's Office-Financial Generalist (Intern) February 2017-June 2017

- Maintained and analyzed accounting records; reconciled variances between account summaries
- Prepared daily reports, provided basic information to the public, the bar and the Court
- Entered and retrieved data from automated financial management data base
- Informed customers of required fees, received payments, issued receipts
- Balanced cash register, processed credit card payments for filed documents

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Resident Assistant, Residential Life August 2016 – Present

- Provide a safe living and learning environment for residents
- Coordinate educational and social programs for residents
- Greeted students in a busy office setting; escort students to cultural events in Manhattan
- Provided information on registration deadlines, club activities; assisted at events

COMMUNITY/VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

New York City Public Advocates Office, New York, NY

Translator January 2014 – Present

- Work with attorneys and clients, translating documents from Spanish to English
- Explain legal procedures and processes to non-native speakers of English

SKILLS:

Computer: Microsoft Office (Excel, Word and PowerPoint), Adobe Photoshop and InDesign

Language: Fluent Spanish both written and spoken

First Name Last Name

Town, NY 10000
(123) 456-7890
jmaverick@mercy.edu

EDUCATION

Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY Expected May 2018
Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, specialization: Forensics

Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY December 2016
Associate of Science in Human Services

EXPERIENCE

Westchester Community College, Valhalla, NY July 2016-June 2017
Educational Case Manager (Women Helping Women)

- Assisted in screening for program eligibility, coordinated the registration and intake process
- Developed and implemented workshops for participants and volunteers
- Utilized diverse instructional strategies to facilitate job readiness sessions with participants
- Worked with Outreach Specialist to execute outreach and recruitment activities
- Provided a “safe space” environment conducive for empowerment and leadership building
- Documented interactions and progress of participants weekly

St Christopher’s Inc., Dobbs Ferry, NY January 2018 – Present
Volunteer Intern

- Interviewed clients to gather information regarding backgrounds, needs and progress
- Met with youth in groups to discuss violence prevention and delinquent behavioral consequences
- Ensured participants were in compliance with rules and regulations
- Motivated youth to become involved and engaged in recreational programs
- Offered Life Skills and strategies to clients and their families

New York Police Department, New York, NY September 2016 – December 2016
Community Athletic Program Volunteer

- Worked with community policing units, leaders and youth to open dialogue with the community
- Reported progress to program directors and program leaders
- Collaborated with professionals and youth to deter neighborhood violence and offer recreational programs
- Assisted in implementing community Take Back the Night Event within precinct’s district

ACTIVITIES

Member, Pre-Law Professions Club, Mercy College Spring 2017 – Present
Member, Exercise Science Club, Mercy College Spring 2017 – Present

SKILLS: Computer: Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint; Language: Fluent Spanish

SUMMARY

Experienced office manager in a large law firm; strong background in client relations with the ability to develop rapport with clients, staff and law partners. Well versed in Lexis, Nexus, legal procedures, documents and forms, business operations and legal research. Excellent troubleshooting/problem solving skills. Enjoys fast paced settings; presently seeking to utilize legal/administrative experience in the legal department of a corporation.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies | Mercy College | Dobbs Ferry, NY Expected May 2020

- GPA: 3.83

EXPERIENCE

Marks, O’Hara, Doyle and Smith, New York, NY

Chief Administrative Manager August 2014 – Present

- Interview, hire and supervise a staff of 7 clerks, assistants and student interns
- Compose correspondence and legal responses on behalf of the firm’s attorneys
- Handle confidential documents and correspondence, enter data into legal data bases, Lexis, Nexus
- Conduct initial research into cases, decisions and information concerning precedence
- Initiate contact with new and existing clients on behalf of the attorneys to explain documents and answer questions they may have after the first client consultation
- Calculate and manage the firm’s annual budget for administrative office supplies and handle the calendars and schedules for the firm’s attorneys

Galbraith and Newman Attorneys at Law, New York, NY

Customer Service Representative January 2010-July 2014

- Provided high quality customer service through personal contact with clients, attorneys
- Consistently earned “Excellent” level ratings through client and constituent feedback
- Handled customer issues and scheduled appointment for services in person by phone
- Assumed accountability for improving client services; met and exceeded performance standards in areas of planning, research and writing
- Communicated, translating difficult concepts to clients in Spanish, French or Italian when necessary

COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Chamber of Commerce, New York, NY 2014-Present
Volunteer/Community Outreach

New York Police Department 2010-Present
Community Educator- Volunteer

SKILLS:

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, CM ECF and F4ST, Lexus/Nexus

Language: Bilingual English and Spanish and Italian



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. There are 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 (sometimes two paragraphs): (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

Abcdefg@mercy.edu

July 27, 2018

New York State Department of Labor
101 Hope Boulevard
Ossining, NY 10100

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to apply to Labor Market Intern position posted through my career center at Mercy College. As a student aspiring to work in government administration, I believe that this internship would be the perfect experience allowing me to explore those possibilities and gain meaningful, career related experiences.

As a sophomore majoring in Legal Studies: Political Science, my interests and part time work history revolve around data gathering, understanding and interpreting trends. As you will see from the attached resume, my background includes working in an attorney's office as a volunteer and in the human resources department of large law firm. I love legal research, numbers and I am learning to spot trends. I am also interested in government administration.

I enjoy working and learning from professionals and I would love to work with the Labor Market Analyst to gain additional skills and learn more about the world of government administration. One day, I want to work for the US Government as a valued administrator. Past part time jobs have included working in retail, pumping gas and working as a lifeguard at a local swim club. I have learned to be adaptable to changing priorities. I am especially accurate, detail oriented and good with math and numbers. In addition to working part time, I am a full time student, a Student Government Board member and I participate in Division II Athletics, while maintaining a strong GPA. My ability to prioritize, collaborate and make decisions have helped me to manage this busy, but rewarding, lifestyle and I am certain that I will be a good fit for this internship.

Through my activities and courses, I have learned that I enjoy the administrative side of project management and I love the workings of law, government and politics. My background and interests combined will contribute to the quality of commitment and work as an intern within the Department of Labor. I look forward to meeting with you in person to learn more about the internship and to answering any questions that you may have regarding my background.

Sincerely,

First Name Last Name

First Name Last Name

Town, NY 10000

(123) 456-7890

jmaverick@mercy.edu

January 10, 2018

Office of World Food Bank Organization
405 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10001

Dear Internship Coordinator:

I am writing in application for the Assistant to the Director of Communications Intern position that I found posted through my career center at Mercy College. I believe that my combined experiences in business, various administrative positions and my passion for the world of International Relations would make me an asset to the World Health Organization.

As you will see from the attached resume, I am a junior majoring in International Relations and Diplomacy and taking courses in Business, Nutrition, and Public Health Policy. During my time in college, I have had the privilege of travelling with my parents, medical care volunteers, to Africa over summer vacations. During these visits, I learned first-hand the personal and societal impact that poor diet and nutrition have on individuals, families their children, cultures, and to local economies. It was during this time that my aspiration to eliminating world hunger became my mission.

Recently, I had the opportunity of spending time abroad in a third world country while accompanying a college group. I learned to speak Spanish and French and I gained skills necessary in forging partnerships with local leadership for consensus on project management and delivery. My background also includes strong management and technology skills. Presently, I volunteer with a local food bank and in the office of US Senator Smith, combining interests and experiences that enable adapting to rapidly changing circumstances, politics and legislation that could impact public health resources in my state and locality.

The Assistant to the Director of Communications internship will allow me to move forward toward the achievement of my goals. Serving in this capacity, I will learn from among the best in the field of International Relations, strengthening skills in research, data collection, and consensus building on a world stage. I am very excited to meet with you in person to discuss the internship and why you will never meet a more enthusiastic and dedicated intern. I want to offer my educational experiences and insights and skills to your world-class organization one that is dedicated to world-wide health and wellness.

Sincerely,

First and Last Name



DF Campus: MH 247A
BX Campus: Room 2150
MT Campus: 3rd Floor



CPD@mercy.edu



914.674.7203



Handshake
<https://mercy.joinhandshake.com/>