

CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

-----

# Résumé & Cover Letter Guide

# Résumé & Cover Letter Guide

## Writing a Résumé

Résumé-Writing Basics	Page 3
Possible Résumé Categories	Page 4
Identifying Transferable Skills	Page 6
List of Action Verbs	Page 7
How to Write Résumé Bullet Points	Page 8
Tips and Strategies	Page 9
Sample Résumés	Page 10
Reference List Format	Page 15

## Writing Job Search Letters

Cover Letter Basics	Page 17
Follow-Up Letter Basics	Page 17
Cover Letter Format	Page 18
Letter of Inquiry Format	Page 19
Follow-Up/Thank-You Letter Format	Page 20
Sample Job Description	Page 21
Sample Résumé to Match Job Description	Page 22
Sample Cover Letter to Match Job Description	Page 23
Notes	Page 24



# Writing a Résumé

# **Résumé-Writing Basics**

#### What is a résumé?

For current students and recent graduates, the résumé is typically a one-page document that highlights your educational background, experiences, accomplishments, skills, and interests. This length could vary depending on the industry and depth of your experiences, so knowing expectations within your field is critical for résumé success. It is important to use appropriate phrasing on your résumé, emphasizing the keywords stated in the job description in relation to the skills and accomplishments you have decided to highlight.

Résumés are road maps that assist you with identifying areas where you need to obtain experience. They should evolve over time, and ultimately will become a guide and marketing tool about you and your abilities. Résumés will initially be viewed for 30 to 60 seconds and be put into "yes," "no," or "maybe" piles. To maximize your chances of making it to the "yes" pile, be sure to follow some basic résumé rules, as outlined throughout this guide. Since your résumé is a reflection of your abilities and your personality, you want to make the best first impression possible.

#### Why create a résumé early?

You may think that you don't need a résumé until you start applying for internships or full-time jobs, but the Center for Career Development recommends you get started as early as possible. Listed below are three primary reasons why beginning your résumé early will be advantageous.

#### • Promotes skill building

You do not need to have a major and/or career goal to make writing a résumé an effective activity. A résumé can be a useful tool to begin discussions about your future involvement at UConn. It helps you visualize where you need to fill in the gaps to gain experiences and skills.

When you write a résumé early in your college career, you can use it as a guide to see what skills, experiences, and activities you need to develop over the next four years to help you as you apply for internships, full-time jobs, or graduate school. Regardless of what you decide to do after graduation, if you have demonstrated "transferable" skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, and interpersonal ability, you will find that you are awarded more opportunities than your peers who didn't.

#### • Gives practical preparation

The résumé can also be a practical assignment. You may already have a major and/or career goal and may be applying for career-related summer jobs and/or internships, admission into an academic program at UConn (such as Education), scholarships, on-campus job opportunities, or summer jobs that require a résumé. If you have completed a résumé, you will be prepared for any opportunity that arises.

#### • Helps you keep track of what you do

If you start your résumé early, you will be able to keep track of everything you do throughout your college career. Many students who create their first résumé as seniors have forgotten the details of what they did their first and second years at UConn. Your résumé can be used as a master document that helps you remember information as you modify future résumés and prepare for interviews.

# Possible Résumé Categories

Listed below are definitions and recommendations about the different sections of a résumé.

Section	How do I determine if I need this on my résumé?
Contact Information	Required.
Objective May also be called: -Professional Objective -Career Objective	Recommended for all jobs and internships, but typically not included for graduate school or scholarship applications where personal state- ments are being submitted.
Education	Required.
May also be called: -Educational Background -Academic Background -Academic History	
Related Coursework	Strongly recommended if looking for an internship.
May also be called: -Relevant Coursework -Professional Courses -Coursework	Dependent upon length of résumé and field of interest if applying for a full-time job.
Skills	Strongly recommended that all students include computer skills.
May also be called: -Relevant Skills -Qualifications -Skills and Certifications -Computer Skills	If you have other industry-related skills, you should include those too. (e.g., a biology major with lab skills.)
Relevant Experience May also be called: -Related Experience -Professional Experience -Practicum -Clinical Experience -Internship Experience -Research Experience	Strongly recommended if you have experience related to your Objective statement.
Work Experience	Strongly Recommended.
May also be called: -Work History -Employment -Additional Work Experience	
Activities May also be called: -Campus Involvement -Leadership – if you have held leadership roles and/or had leadership responsibilities	Strongly recommended if you have been involved in certain activities for several months/years.
Volunteer Experience May also be called: -Community Service	Strongly recommended if you have been involved in community service.
-Service -Community Engagement	
Interests	Optional, often used as a space filler.
Additional Categories Research Experience, Awards, Professional Affiliations, Presentations, Publications, Honors	Strongly recommended if you have experience and/or affiliations with any category listed in the previous column (or any others that apply).
References	Not typically listed on résumé. Have a separate page that lists your references.

Definition	Sample
Includes name, address, city, state, zip code, phone number, and Email address.	Pat Student 21 Knowles Avenue, Woodbridge, CT 06479 (860) 999-9999, pat.student@alumni.uconn.edu
This is generally a brief sentence that clarifies any of your skills, abili- ties, or experience that would positively contribute to the opportunity for which you are applying. This sets the order of importance for the remaining categories on your résumé.	Seeking an internship in sales utilizing communication, active listening, and organizational skills.
Area where educational institutions, city, state, degree, and anticipated graduation date are listed. GPA may be listed. Educational institutions are listed in reverse chronological order, with highest degree-conferring institution at the top.	<b>University of Connecticut</b> , Storrs, CT Bachelor of Science, Biological Sciences, May 20XX Minor in Psychology GPA: #.##/#.##
May also include: Minor, Concentration, Relevant Courses, Study Abroad, Honors, Dean's List, GPA, Certifications	<b>University of Granada</b> , Granada, Spain, study abroad participant, January 20XX – May 20XX
Any coursework that is level 2000 or higher that is specific to the profession or industry in which you are seeking employment. It is usually recommended to list between four and eight courses.	Relevant Coursework: -Human Development: Infancy through Adolescence -Legal Aspects of Family Life -Family Interaction Processes -Individual and Family Development
Any specialized knowledge.	Relevant Skills Computer: SAS; Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint Laboratory: Spectrophotometry, Gel Electrophoresis, Microscopy (compound and dissecting), PCR, DNA Isolation and Amplification, Sephadex Column Chromatography
Can be volunteer work, internships, summer and/or part-time jobs that are <u>directly</u> related to a desired position.	See samples, pages 10-13.
May also include: -Relevant research -Senior design projects (for engineers)	
Work history that you want to demonstrate to employers. These jobs don't need to be relevant to the Objective statement. These are typically paid job experiences. This shows employers that you have held jobs and have some understanding of work responsibilities. You don't need to include every job you've held.	See samples, pages 10-13.
Any campus and community involvement.	See samples, pages 10-13.
Activities you were involved in that help individuals and/or the com- munity. This work is generally unpaid, but may also be part of a work study program.	See samples, pages 10-13.
Things you like to do that aren't structured activities.	See samples, pages 10-13.
These categories may be added if relevant to you. Some people add these items to categories that are already listed above. Determining if a separate category is necessary depends on how significant and/or unique the experience is for you and how relevant it is to the Objective.	See samples, pages 10-13.
People who will serve as a <b>positive</b> reference for you.	See sample, page 14.

# Identifying Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are abilities, attributes, and personal qualities obtained during your study and experiences that you can use accross industry lines. The following lists of skills, grouped by functional area, will assist you in identifying skills you can contribute to a company or organization. These would be highlighted on a résumé or during any networking activity with an employer.

#### Analytical Skills

Ability to:

- sort and analyze data
- compile and rank information
- apply information creatively to specific problems
- synthesize information, concepts, and principles
- evaluate information against appropriate standards
- apply a variety of methods to test the validity of data
- identify problems and needs
- design an experiment, plan, or model that systematically defines a problem
- formulate questions relevant to clarifying a particular problem, topic, or issue

#### Leadership and Administrative Skills Ability to:

- analyze tasks
  identify people who if
- identify people who can contribute to the solution of a problem or task
- identify resources useful in solving a problem
- delegate responsibility for completion of a task
- motivate and lead people
- organize people and tasks to achieve specific goals
- keep a group "on track" and moving toward the achievement of a common goal
- maintain group cooperation and support
- delegate tasks and responsibilities
- initiate new ideas and tasks

#### **Communication Skills**

Ability to:

- listen with objectivity
- use various forms and styles of written communication
- speak effectively to individuals and groups
- express needs, wants, opinions, and preferences appropriately
- · describe objectives or events accurately

#### **Creative Skills**

Ability to:

- expand on and add to new ideas
- · discover new concepts or methods
- think beyond preconceived assumptions
- see and use patterns in the environment to make strategic decisions

#### **Interpersonal Skills**

Ability to:

- interact effectively with peers, superiors, and subordinates
- express feelings appropriately
- understand the feelings of others
- teach a skill or concept to others
- analyze behavior of self and others in group situations
- demonstrate appropriate social behaviors in a variety of settings
- work under time and environmental pressures
- convey a positive self-image to others
- demonstrate patience

#### Problem-Solving and Critical-Thinking Skills

Ability to:

- recognize critical issues quickly and accurately when making a decision or solving a problem
- define parameters of a problem
- identify reasonable criteria for assessing the value or appropriateness of an action or behavior
- adapt behaviors and perspectives to changing environments and office norms
- apply appropriate criteria to strategies and action plans
- create innovative solutions to complex problems
- consider events and ideas from several different perspectives

#### **Organizational Skills**

Ability to:

- assess needs
- set realistic goals
- set priorities
- adhere to deadlines
- synthesize facts, concepts, and principles
- predict future trends and patterns
- make and keep a schedule
- · identify alternative courses of action
- follow through with a plan or decision

#### **Technological Skills**

Ability to:

- effectively assess the needs of a project and apply appropriate technology, as needed
- easily and effectively operate word-processing and spreadsheet programs
- perform research using the Internet
- use media formats, such as PowerPoint and websites, to present information and ideas in new and innovative ways

## List of Action Verbs

Organized by skills (in past tense). Begin each statement with a strong action verb to describe accomplishments and experiences.

#### **Analytical Skills**

**Financial** 

analyzed appraised ascertained assessed audited balanced budgeted calculated clarified compared derived diagnosed estimated evaluated examined financed formed improved increased inquired inspected measured processed purchased qualified quantified rated reconciled regulated specified surveyed synthesized targeted tested verified

#### Research/Scientific

annotated discovered formulated interpreted investigated measured qualified quantified recorded researched searched studied surveyed traced

#### Leadership/ Administrative Skills

#### Leadership

accomplished achieved attended chaired coached convened enlisted excelled facilitated focused guided initiated instilled led strategized Management

acted applied assigned balanced concluded conducted contracted delegated directed exercised exhibited financed forecasted generated implemented managed mentored projected provided reinforced succeeded supervised trained

#### Motivation/Persuasive

acquired committed elicited empowered encouraged influenced inspired led mentored motivated persuaded recruited sold solicited stimulated suggested united

#### **Communication Skills**

#### Verbal

addressed advertised conveyed demonstrated described discussed explained expressed facilitated illustrated informed introduced marketed negotiated prosented publicized reported responded shared showed suggested summarized

#### Written

authored briefed communicated composed constructed corresponded critiqued drafted edited interpreted outlined proofread published reviewed revised translated wrote

#### Creative Skills

Innovative created designed developed displayed exhibited illustrated invented made named performed produced publicized recruited shaped staged visualized

#### <u>Interpersonal Skills</u>

Teamwork collaborated competed contributed cooperated coordinated ensured interacted intervened interviewed involved joined negotiated participated perceived promoted recognized referred related represented resolved

#### Helping

advised aided assisted clarified coached counseled enabled encouraged guided helped listened protected provided served supported tended trained volunteered

#### Teaching/Learning

coached corrected critiqued educated graded informed instructed learned lectured mastered memorized mentored modeled observed studied taught tutored

#### Problem-Solving Skills

#### Decision-Making

adjusted allocated changed completed concluded controlled defined delivered distributed established expanded expedited implemented investigated monitored obtained planned recommended selected solved staged utilized

#### Organizational Skills

Planning arranged catalogued categorized classified collated collected compiled coordinated designed documented grouped inventoried located maintained modified ordered organized planned prepared prioritized reorganized scheduled simplified updated

#### **Technological Skills**

#### Data/Technical

analyzed built coded computed corrected debugged detected developed diagnosed identified installed invented licensed operated printed programmed protected recorded reinforced repaired reproduced restored retrieved treated utilized

# How to Write Résumé Bullet Points

Bullet points describe what was accomplished or learned in a certain experience. They allow the employer to understand how each experience relates to the one for which you are applying and answer the questions "What," "Why," and "How."

## What did you do?

To start, brainstorm a list of every task you have completed in that experience—did you answer phones? Work as a team on something? Keep track of something? Think about the various aspects of the position you held. Perhaps you:

- Answered phones
- Worked as a team with co-workers and supervisors
- Restocked shelves when needed

This is a list of tasks. What will bring your résumé to the next level is how and why.

## How did you do it?

Review the list of tasks and locate patterns in the types of responsibilities you had. These tasks demonstrate the skills gained from the experience. Did you talk to customers, clients, or co-workers? This may illustrate communication skills. Were you responsible for others? This may be evidence of leadership or managerial skills.

Each bullet point should start with a strong action verb (see p. 7 of the Résumé and Cover Letter Guide). If the experience is still occurring, the verb is in present tense. If it has ended, past tense is used.

- Communicated with customers over the phone
- Collaborated with co-workers and supervisors
- Monitored product inventory using an Excel worksheet

Look at the job description for the position you are applying for and highlight the skills most desired. Or review the skills chosen for your résumé objective statement. Were these skills developed or honed in the tasks you described in your bullet statements? Have you covered all aspects of the position?

## Why did you do it?

This element adds context to the tasks so the person reading the résumé better understands your previous experiences. Consider the importance and end result of your tasks.

- Addressed customers' needs and concerns through effective communication over the phone
- Collaborated with co-workers and supervisors on a new marketing campaign to better reach target audience and increase monthly sales, resulting in a 20% increase
- Monitored product inventory using Excel to guarantee adequate stock and save \$1000 each month on express shipping charges

# **Tips and Strategies**

## Grammar

- Make sure there are no typos. Don't rely completely on spell check.
- Check your grammar; errors are unacceptable.
- Avoid abbreviations, except for states.
- Do not use personal pronouns (use third person; take yourself out of the situation-no "I," "me," or "my").

### Content

- Have someone else look over your résumé (the Center for Career Developent offers free daily résumé critiques. Go to www.career.uconn.edu to see available hours).
- Have the correct information—double-check your facts, position titles, locations, and grammar.
- Personalize your experience and skill set to the position, department, or company to which you are applying.
- Demonstrate an obvious connection between Objective, Skills, and Experience sections so the résumé reads easily and clearly.
- Do not include personal information on the résumé. Marital status, age, weight, religion, etc. should not be listed. \*\*NOTE: This is relevant when applying for positions within the United States. If you are applying for a job in another country, you will need to check the appropriateness of personal information on the résumé. Some countries will expect you to include these facts.

## Design

- Be consistent with format. List the month, year, organization/company, location, and position title.
- Use bold and italics consistently yet sparingly.
- Use the same font throughout the document! Font size should be 10 to 12 pt. Your name can be larger.
- Choose a common font (e.g. Times New Roman or Garamond) that will easily translate from older to newer versions of software.
- Establish equal margins all the way around the page (0.5-inch minimum, 1.0-inch maximum on all sides).
- Purchase quality résumé paper (bonded) in a light or subdued color (white, ivory, cream, etc.) with no speckles or designs (speckles or designs will show if the document is copied).
- Avoid using tables, grids, and templates as they do not transfer well when emailed.
- Keep the length of a traditional undergraduate résumé to one page; certain industries, job fields, majors, and graduate programs may require longer ones.
- Create a résumé that is unique to your personality-avoid templates in software programs.

## General Suggestions

- Have more than one version of your résumé so it can be personalized to an industry or position.
- Keep a file folder of accomplishments, job descriptions, awards, etc. to add to your résumé on a regular basis.
- Keep a master résumé (it may be many pages) listing everything that you have ever accomplished so there is always a strong database you can use to develop a current document.
- References should go on a separate page.
- Stay positive—résumés change often and can be updated to fit your circumstances.

# Sample Résumés

## Developmental Progress

The résumé samples in this guide follow Pat Student from freshman year through senior year, chronicling the transition from being an undecided major to a student with solid career plans. As you follow Pat's progress, you'll notice different experiences and jobs along the way. Use the guide to learn the components of a résumé and how to best present yourself. This will also help you see how you can use the Objective, Skills, and Activities sections to develop your résumé over your time at UConn."

## Style and Format

These résumés are for the purpose of illustration only and do not depict every category or nuance that résumés can contain. Additional sample résumés can be found on our website at www.career.uconn.edu or in the Center for Career Development office.



This is a sample résumé for a first-year student. You'll notice that there is high school information on this résumé, which is acceptable for a short time. Once this student enters junior year, it will no longer be acceptable to have high school information on the résumé.

Home Address	Pat Student	where you are most likely to re School Address
21 Knowles Aver Woodbridge, CT (555) 555-5555		108 Buckley Hall North Storrs, CT 06269 Pat.Student@uconn.edu
Objective	Seeking an office campus job using communion	cation and organizational skills
Education	<b>University of Connecticut</b> , Storrs, CT <i>Bachelor of Arts, College of Liberal Arts and S</i> GPA: #.##/4.00	Sciences, May 20XX
	<b>Amity Senior High School</b> , Woodbridge, CT <i>High School Diploma, June 20XX</i>	
Skills and Certifications	Computer: Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPo Certifications: CPR, expires August 20XX	oint
Work Experience	<ul> <li>Woodbridge Parks and Recreation, Woodbridge Counselor, June 20XX – August 20XX</li> <li>Addressed the safety of all children in disciplinary techniques when appropria</li> <li>Coordinated different social events suggroup activities for campers</li> </ul>	the camp and used effective ate
	<ul> <li>Big Y World Class Market, Woodbridge, CT Cashier, March 20XX – August 20XX</li> <li>Responded to customers with accurate available for purchase</li> <li>Maintained a cash register accurately,</li> </ul>	
Volunteer Experience	<ul> <li>Month of Kindness Committee, University of Member, November 20XX – Present</li> <li>Offer hugs and daily doses of kindness</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>Teen Mentoring Program, YMCA, Woodbridg Special Events Volunteer, August 20XX – Jun</li> <li>Planned Halloween party for 70 high s</li> <li>Arrived early and stayed late to both set</li> </ul>	chool students
	<b>The Humane Society</b> , Woodbridge, CT <i>Volunteer, October 20XX – May 20XX</i>	
Activities	<b>National Honor Society</b> , Amity High School, <i>Member, February 20XX – June 20XX</i>	Woodbridge, CT

The formats that you will see in these résumés are just samples; there are many other formats and styles. Some variations can be picked up at the Center for Career Development office or you can find them on our website at www.career.uconn.edu.

#### As Pat gained more experience, the format of the résumé changed to help highlight differ-SOPHOMORE YEAR ent activities and experiences. Pat Student 21 Knowles Avenue, Woodbridge, CT 06479 (555) 555-5555 • Pat.Student@uconn.edu Objective Seeking a part-time position related to the field of history utilizing interpersonal and organizational skills Education You will notice that between freshman and University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT sophomore year, Pat got involved in volunteer Bachelor of Arts, History, May 20XX opportunities (Natural History Museum), and GPA: #.##/4.00 peer education (UConn Connects Facilitator), and found a part-time job (SUBWAY). What will **Museum Experience** you do? Museum of Natural History, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT Volunteer, November 20XX – Present Leadership Activities UConn Connects, First Year Programs, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT Facilitator, September 20XX - Present Serve as a mentor and university resource for six students who are on academic probation or at risk of being dismissed from the university Organize weekly one-on-one meetings with students to discuss study habits and academics and make referrals to various campus resources Woodbridge Parks and Recreation, Woodbridge, CT *Camp Counselor*, June 20XX – August 20XX (seasonal) Planned, implemented and coordinated activities for 15 children ages six through nine ٠ • Ensured the safety of all children and used effective disciplinary techniques when appropriate Work Experience SUBWAY, Storrs, CT Sandwich Maker/Cashier, November 20XX - Present • Aid customers in a friendly and positive manner while maintaining accuracy and efficiency Big Y World Class Market, Woodbridge, CT Cashier, March 20XX – August 20XX Ring up customer groceries and help bag their items Activities HOLDUP! (Husky Outreach for Leadership Development, Understanding, and Pride!), Storrs, CT Peer Educator, December 20XX - Present **Volunteer Experience** Month of Kindness Committee, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT Volunteer, November 20XX - Present Teen Mentoring Program, YMCA, Woodbridge, CT Special Events Volunteer, August 20XX – June 20XX Arranged Halloween party for 70 high school students and involved participants in decorating decisions Counseled participating teenagers about general life issues by actively listening and acting as a role model **Computer Skills** Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint Interests

Running, Swimming, Traveling, Volunteering, Rock Climbing

Pat has started to narrow down career objectives and has found an on-campus job related to museums.(Benton Museum). Pat has also become involved in a campus organization that builds transferable skills (SUBOG), and has done additional volunteer work (Community Outreach).

	Pat Student	
	Avenue, Woodbridge, CT 06479 nt@uconn.edu   www.linkedin.cor	
<b><u>Objective</u>:</b> Seeking an internship at a living histor	rical museum using skills in organ	ization, creativity, and oral communicatio
Education: Bachelor of Arts, History, May 20XX <u>University of Connecticut</u> , Storrs, CT Overall GPA: #.##/4.00		Pat is applying for an internship and has taken some upper-level courses relevan the objective, so a related courses section has been added.
Related Courses: The Artist and Society Medieval Islamic Civilization to 1700	Museums and the Interpretation Constitutional History of the Ur	
<u>Museum Experience:</u> Student Employee <u>Benton Museum</u> , University of Connec • Exhibit museum displays for 1		June 20XX – Pres ant features to best engage visitors
support to museum staff	document paperwork, and answe	er telephones to provide administrative
· •	ncluding research and set-up, and	November 20XX – May 2
<ul> <li>Interacted with patrons about</li> </ul>	upcoming events through Facebo	ook fan page and Twitter feed
Leadership Activities: Peer Educator, <u>HOLDUP! (Husky Outre</u> Storrs, CT	each for Leadership Development,	<u>, Understanding, and Pride!</u> ), December 20XX – Pres
Leadership Activities: Peer Educator, <u>HOLDUP! (Husky Outree</u> Storrs, CT • Present workshops to high sch Facilitator <u>UConn Connects</u> , First Year Programs, • Coached six students who are serving as a mentor and univer-	each for Leadership Development, hool students to raise self-awaren , University of Connecticut, Storrs, e on academic probation or at risk ersity resource ngs with students to discuss study	<u>, Understanding, and Pride!</u> ), December 20XX – Pres less and introduce leadership concepts September 20XX – December 2 CT of being dismissed from the university b y habits and academics, and made referr
<ul> <li>Leadership Activities:</li> <li>Peer Educator, <u>HOLDUP! (Husky Outree</u> Storrs, CT         <ul> <li>Present workshops to high sch</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitator         <ul> <li>UConn Connects, First Year Programs,</li> <li>Coached six students who are serving as a mentor and universerving as a</li></ul></li></ul>	each for Leadership Development, hool students to raise self-awaren , University of Connecticut, Storrs, e on academic probation or at risk ersity resource ngs with students to discuss study Pat l activ onnecticut, Storrs, CT <u>Union Board of Governors (SUBC</u> rsial university issues to ensure U	<u>Understanding, and Pride!</u> ), December 20XX – Pres- bess and introduce leadership concepts September 20XX – December 2 CT of being dismissed from the university b v habits and academics, and made referr became involved in History Club as an vity directly related to career aspirations. September 20XX – Pres- DG) September 20XX – Pres-
<ul> <li>Leadership Activities:</li> <li>Peer Educator, <u>HOLDUP! (Husky Outree</u> Storrs, CT         <ul> <li>Present workshops to high sch</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitator         <ul> <li>UConn Connects, First Year Programs,</li> <li>Coached six students who are serving as a mentor and universe serving as a mentor and universe to various campus resources</li> </ul> </li> <li>Activities:         <ul> <li>Member, <u>History Club</u>, University of Commute, Store, CT</li> <li>Provide feedback on controve</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	each for Leadership Development, hool students to raise self-awaren university of Connecticut, Storrs, on academic probation or at risk ersity resource ngs with students to discuss study Path active onnecticut, Storrs, CT <u>Union Board of Governors (SUBC</u> rsial university issues to ensure U stening to other students' voiced ach, University of Connecticut, Stor	<u>Understanding, and Pride!</u> ), December 20XX – Prese sess and introduce leadership concepts September 20XX – December 2 CT of being dismissed from the university b v habits and academics, and made referr became involved in History Club as an vity directly related to career aspirations. September 20XX – Prese OG) September 20XX – Prese Conn students success and satisfaction opinions about possible invited speakers orrs, CT January 20XX – Prese
<ul> <li>Leadership Activities:</li> <li>Peer Educator, HOLDUP! (Husky Outree Storrs, CT         <ul> <li>Present workshops to high sch</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitator         <ul> <li>UConn Connects, First Year Programs,</li> <li>Coached six students who are serving as a mentor and unive</li> <li>Led weekly one-on-one meetir to various campus resources</li> </ul> </li> <li>Activities:         <ul> <li>Member, <u>History Club</u>, University of Con Member, Lecture Committee, <u>Student</u></li> <li>University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT                 <ul> <li>Provide feedback on controve</li> <li>Offer input and advice while lit</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	each for Leadership Development, hool students to raise self-awaren university of Connecticut, Storrs, on academic probation or at risk ersity resource ngs with students to discuss study Pat l active onnecticut, Storrs, CT <u>Union Board of Governors (SUBO</u> rsial university issues to ensure U stening to other students' voiced ach, University of Connecticut, Stor the, University of Connecticut, Stor	Understanding, and Pride!), December 20XX – Prese September 20XX – December 2 CT of being dismissed from the university b v habits and academics, and made referr became involved in History Club as an vity directly related to career aspirations. September 20XX – Prese OG) September 20XX – Prese Conn students success and satisfaction opinions about possible invited speakers orrs, CT January 20XX – Prese Dorrs, CT November 20XX – Prese

# As you can see in the evolution of Pat's résumé, involvement began in the first year, helping Pat develop transferable skills and make informed decisions related to major and career path.

#### SENIOR YEAR

#### PAT STUDENT

Because Pat used software

computer skills have been moved up since so many muse-

that software.

There is a separate internship

section added since it is most

relevant to Pat's career goals.

related to museum work, the

ums are looking for employees who are already familiar with

21 Knowles Avenue, Woodbridge, CT 06479 • (555) 555-5555 • Pat.Student@alumni.uconn.edu • www.linkedin.com/in/patstudent

#### **OBJECTIVE**

Seeking a full-time position at a living historical museum using analytical, communication, and organizational skills

#### **EDUCATION**

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT Bachelor of Arts, History, May 20XX Overall GPA: #.##/4.00; Major GPA: #.##/4.00



University of Westminster, London, England, Study Abroad Participant, January 20XX – June 20XX

#### **COMPUTER SKILLS**

PastPerfect (museum software), Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint; Social Media Platforms

#### **INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

Mashantucket Pequot Museum, Mashantucket, CT, Exhibit Intern, September 20XX – January 20XX

- Inventoried, categorized, and designed display documents in preparation for new exhibits
- Annotated and calculated monthly museum attendance numbers for assessment and budgeting purposes
- Interpreted museum exhibits for 100 300 visitors daily, noting important features and catering to visitors' interests

#### MUSEUM EXPERIENCE

Benton Museum, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, Student Employee, June 20XX - Present

- Introduce art museum exhibits and identify distinct aspects of displays to 10-50 visitors daily
- Provide administrative support to museum staff through data entry, filing documentation, and answering phones
- Greet customers and clients while offering insight into purchase selections in the museum gift shop

#### Museum of Natural History, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, Volunteer, November 20XX - May 20XX

- · Prepared displays for exhibits, including research and set-up, and consulted with curator and other museum staff
- Researched exhibits and time periods to add details and substance to information provided to visitors
- Interacted with patrons about upcoming events through Facebook fan page and Twitter feed

#### LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Student Internship Panel, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, Presenter, February 20XX

#### Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG), University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Lecture Committee Chairperson/Member, September 20XX - Present

- Coordinate and schedule lecture series where entertaining and informative speakers can present to the student body
- Summarize student suggestions about which speakers to invite to campus
- Trace trends in students' opinions and report feedback at meetings to ensure UConn student success

#### UConn Connects, First Year Programs, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Facilitator, September 20XX – December 20XX

- Promoted effective study and time management skills to aid six students who were at risk of being dismissed from the university
- Scheduled weekly one-on-one meetings with students to discuss academics and made referrals to various campus
  resources

#### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AND ACTIVITIES

**History Club**, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, *Member*, September 20XX – Present **Office of Community Outreach**, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, *Volunteer*, January 20XX – Present **HOLDUP! (Husky Outreach for Leadership Development, Understanding, and Pride!)**, Storrs, CT *Peer Educator*, December 20XX – Present

Professional Development Conference, Storrs, CT, Attendee, September 20XX Month of Kindness Committee, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, Volunteer, November 20XX – December 20XX

#### WORK EXPERIENCE

Woodbridge Parks and Recreation, Woodbridge, CT, Camp Counselor, June 20XX – August 20XX (seasonal)

## **Reference List Format**



# Writing Job Search Letters

## **Cover Letter Basics**

A cover letter is a standard business letter that introduces your résumé and serves as a marketing tool." A cover letter may accompany résumés you submit during the job or internship search process, but is not necessary to distribute one at career fairs or other networking events.

A good cover letter will describe the reasons why the employer should consider inviting you for an interview. These reasons might include, but are not limited to, your educational training, work experience, and personal qualities and attributes. Since the basics of your educational training and work experience are already listed on your résumé, it is your responsibility to elaborate on these experiences and state how they will influence the contribution you would make to the organization. Be sure to mention something about the company/organization as it makes the letter more personalized for that organization, and creates a better first impression.

Letters of Inquiry vs. Letters of Application: There are typically two types of cover letters that accompany résumés: letters of inquiry and letters of application. These letters should be approximately one full page in length, but no longer. A letter of inquiry is used to express your interest in a particular organization and inquire about possible job openings. Typically, a letter of inquiry is sent as a marketing strategy on the part of the candidate. Conversely, a letter of application is sent as a result of seeing a job announcement for a particular position to which you are applying.

# **Follow-Up Letter Basics**

Follow-up letters are important pieces of the job search. They are meant to keep you in an employer's mind after an interview or meeting. These letters allow you to further indicate interest in a company or a specific position and thank an employer for taking the time to speak to you individually. This letter affords you the opportunity to clarify or expand on pertinent points made or questions asked, and to share additional relevant information about your qualifications.

You can use the follow-up letter after any conversation you have with an employer or after a career fair, phone interview, or in-person interview. The follow-up letter is typically more concise than a cover letter and should range from one to two paragraphs in length. Make sure that you always use professional language when communicating with employers. Follow-up letters can be handwritten (as long as your writing is legible), or processed on a personal computer, and mailed or e-mailed, depending on what the norm is for that particular industry. Remember: send your follow-up letters within 48 hours of meeting with employers!

## **Cover Letter Format**

Your Name Your Address City, State Zip Date

Name of Employer Contact (or HR Director) Title Organization Street Address City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. \_\_\_\_\_: (use last name)

The first paragraph in your cover letter is the introduction. In this paragraph, you need to indicate why you are writing and make a connection with the person to whom you are writing. Mention the purpose of your letter, the position about which you are corresponding, and why you want to work at the organization. Make a connection with the reader by mentioning a common professional acquaintance or by expressing your interest in the organization (for example: "Professor Jones told me about your company" or "I learned about your opportunity through the University of Connecticut's Center for Career Development"). You will most likely want to conclude the paragraph with a statement similar to a thesis statement, stating the skills you are going to address.

In the middle paragraphs, address in detail the skills and experiences you have that would be beneficial to the position and/or organization. Select items on your résumé that are directly related to the position or organization and expand on them. These skills can be arranged by skill set or past employment experience. There is no single "right" way to incorporate this information into a cover letter. **Do not simply repeat what is already listed on your résumé!** This is probably the most common cover letter mistake. Instead, use the selected items to make a connection to the position for which you are applying. The items you choose to highlight in this paragraph should be demonstrable so you will be able to discuss them at greater length in an interview.

In order to effectively make the connection between your skills, experiences, and the position and/or organization, you will need to have knowledge of both the position and the organization. Researching the position and the company prior to beginning the cover letter will facilitate the writing of this third paragraph. Remember, this paragraph needs to contain solid information regarding how your skills and experiences match the qualifications for the position. Explain how you can add value to the company. Just simply writing general statements regarding your desire to work for the organization, or how you are impressed with it, will not suffice.

In the closing paragraph of your cover letter, take the time to thank the employer for looking over your application materials, and reiterate your interest in the position and/or organization. Also, express your willingness to follow up with more information if needed, and provide your phone number and e-mail address for contact.

"Sincerely" or "Respectfully,"

Signature

Your Name (Typed)

## Letter of Inquiry Format

Your Address City, State Zip Date

Name of Employer Contact Title Organization Street Address City, State Zip A letter of inquiry differs from a traditional cover letter in that it accompanies a résumé to an organization that may not necessarily be actively posting an opportunity. The objective of this letter is to demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and to highlight that you have specific skills, education, and or experience that may be of interest to them.

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. \_\_\_\_:(use last name only)

The first paragraph should demonstrate your interest in pursuing opportunities within the company or organization, explain how you learned about the company or organization, and indicate specific areas within the company or organization for which you would like to be considered.

In the middle paragraph, you will need to emphasize the skills, experiences, and/or education that are transferable to the company or organization. You should also include the type of employment you are seeking. Choose items on your résumé that you want to highlight. In order to correctly identify the right items to highlight, you will need to have thoroughly researched the company or organization. You should understand how your experience matches the skills, experience, and education desired by the company or organization, and explain that clearly and specifically in this paragraph. General statements regarding your desire to work for the organization, or how you are impressed with it, will not suffice.

In the closing paragraph of your letter, thank the employer for taking the time to look at your application materials and reiterate your interest in the organization. Also, express your willingness to follow up with more information if needed, and provide your phone number and email address.

"Sincerely" or "Respectfully,"

Signature

Your Name (Typed)

## Follow-Up/ Thank-You Letter Format

Your Address City, State Zip Date

Name of Employer Contact Title Organization Street Address City, State Zip

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. (This can also be addressed to a committee if appropriate.) \_\_\_\_\_: (use last name only)

The first paragraph of the follow-up/thank-you letter allows you to thank the employer(s) for speaking/meeting with you to discuss potential job opening(s) within their organization. Be sure to include where and when you spoke to the employer and what position(s) you discussed. You will probably also want to include a statement regarding what impressed you about the company/position.

In the second paragraph, you will want to reiterate the skills, education, and experiences that make you a uniquely qualified candidate for the position. Think back to the job description and your conversation with the employer(s) to identify the skills required for the position, and tailor this paragraph to highlight where and when you would utilize those very skills. Finally, mention why hiring or meeting you would be a positive move for both parties involved. If the meeting was for networking purposes, discuss how pleased you were to meet the person, and mention the conversation you had.

In your closing paragraph, thank the employer once again for taking the time to meet with you and reaffirm your interest in the position and organization. Express your willingness to follow up with more information if needed and provide your phone number and e-mail address for contact.

"Sincerely" or "Respectfully,"

Signature

Your Name (Typed)

## Sample Job Description

**Position**: Specialty Sales Associate **Company Name**: Arlington Vineyards **Location**: Shelbyville, VA 09876 Note items in bold and/or underline. These are points of significance to be emphasized on the résumé and in the cover letter.

Arlington Vineyards is seeking a highly motivated individual who is interested in working for an esteemed vineyard. Established in 1952, the vineyard is located in the heart of Virginia, where hundreds of acres of grapes produce award-winning wine. Arlington Vineyards participates in weekly tastings and is featured on the VA Wine Trail.

We are seeking high-energy individuals who are self-motivated to succeed. This is an excellent opportunity for an individual with prior sales knowledge. Candidates should have experience working in a team setting, but also be able to work independently.

# An ideal candidate will have an exceptional <u>work ethic</u>, <u>strong time-management skills</u>, and a proven <u>ability to utilize and manage responsibilities</u> as needed.

#### Job Requirements:

- Represent company and interact with clients who are part of the fine foods industry such as retailers, restaurants, and caterers
- Ability to present products for sampling and selling as well as attend trade shows and events in order to promote the merchandise and brand
- Ability to work with little supervision and with a team
- Cold calling and prospecting for potential clients
- Work with magazines and online media (food blogs and online articles) in order to raise awareness of product, boost sales, and spread knowledge of Arlington Vineyards
- Administrative responsibilities include travel arrangements, correspondence via electronic and post mail, management of client databases, and handling of client requests.
- Ability to travel frequently, mostly within state and region

#### Minimum Job Qualifications:

- Bachelor of Arts degree or higher education.
- Minimum 3.00 GPA
- Proficient in Excel, Outlook, OneNote, and PowerPoint
- Demonstrated written and verbal communication skills
- Interest in the sales industry is a must
- No prior food/beverage sales experience is needed; however, we do look for candidates who have proven track records of success in school/academics, employment, and/or extracurricular activities

#### Contact:

Ms. Eloise Smith, Hiring Director 430 Bridgewater Way Shelbyville, Virginia 09876 ESmith@Arlingtonvineyards.com (555) 555-5555 www.arlingtonvineyards.com

#### **Application**:

Submit a cover letter, résumé, and three references via email. Position open until filled.

## Sample Résumé to Match Job Description

### **Claire Brown**

368 Fairfield Way, Storrs, CT 06269 • (203) 123-4567 claire.brown@gmail.com • www.linkedin.com/in/clairebrown

#### Objective

To obtain a full-time sales position in the food and beverage industry utilizing strong verbal communication skills, teamwork, and computer expertise.

#### Education

**University of Connecticut**, Storrs, CT *Bachelor of Arts*, Major: Psychology, May 20XX Minor: Business Fundamentals Major GPA: 3.54/4.00, Dean's List Fall 20XX

#### **Relevant Coursework**

Consumer Behavior, Sales Management and Leadership, Strategic Brand Marketing, Persuasion, Advanced Non-Verbal Communication, New Media Marketing Strategies, Cross-Cultural Communication

#### Skills

*Computer*: Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint, Word, Outlook, Tumblr *Language*: Conversational French and Spanish

#### **Related Experience**

#### Ashford Creek Fine Foods Co., New Haven, CT

Assistant to the Manager, May 20XX-August 20XX

- Developed a media package and blog for six-member sales team to use in market expansion efforts
- Documented results of promotional efforts in Excel and presented results to upper management
- Created a training program for company interns after careful observation of how Training Coordinators prepare and develop new hires
- Applied observations to a trial training program for five interns over a period of three weeks

#### Molly's Boutique, Hamden, CT

Associate/Clerk, May 20XX-August 20XX

(Specialized gift shop featured in numerous magazines for high-quality products and service)

- Created distinctive window displays to highlight new merchandise
- Operated cash register and coordinated sales efforts with two other associates

#### **Work Experience**

Department of Career Services, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Front Desk Assistant, September 20XX-Present

- Represent department at events and through verbal and written correspondence
- Construct professional email to staff members and faculty in order to facilitate communication between academic departments and the Department of Career Services
- Determine reason students have for visiting department and direct to appropriate resources

#### Involvement

#### Marketing Society, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Secretary, January 20XX-Present

• Maintain meeting minutes and share written summaries with membership via email and website

Club Sports Gymnastics, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Participant, September 20XX-May 20XX

## Sample Cover Letter to Match Job Description

368 Fairfield Way Storrs, CT 06269 February 10, 20XX

Ms. Eloise Smith Hiring Director Arlington Vineyards 430 Bridgewater Way Shelbyville, VA 09876

NOTE: For the purpose of this cover letter example, items in bold highlight main points that are emphasized in the job posting and/or résumé.

Dear Ms. Smith:

Having a background in a fine foods organization and an **interest in a sales career**, I was excited to discover the Specialty Sales Associate position at Arlington Vineyards on the University of Connecticut's Career Services website. In conducting research about the wine industry, I was made aware of Arlington Vineyards' award-winning products and reputation as a purveyor of the finest products in the food and wine industry. Knowing that your organization **takes strong pride in its work makes it an appealing company** where I could contribute strong verbal communication, interpersonal and **teamwork** skills.

In the past two years, my role at Career Services has expanded from answering telephones to staffing booths at major functions, such as university-wide open house events. I found that having a solid grasp of my product, which in this case was departmental information, has given me confidence in both this job and in my role at Ashford Creek Fine Foods. Whether **writing a blog or reaching out to new clientele**, I know I have been articulate, approachable and informative when sharing content with outside members of the community; these attributes are ones I will continue to use in the Sales Associate position.

While Secretary of the Marketing Society, I was able to work closely with all of the officers as we led a recruitment campaign to attract new members. As part of the executive board, I took on additional tasks beyond the scope of my designated position. In the first month of the effort, I coordinated everyone's schedules to make sure the Society was fully staffed at three involvement fairs. When locating possible new society members, I would stand in front of the table and connect with those who walked by, even if they did not immediately express interest. My ability to coordinate schedules, manage databases, and conduct outreach all helped us yield an influx of new participants.

Through all of my experiences, I have developed the skills which Arlington Vineyards has indicated it needs for someone to be successful as a Specialty Sales Associate, and I look forward to discussing them in person with you. Enclosed is my résumé for your review. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (203) 123-4567 or at claire.brown@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Claire Brown

Signature is italicized because Claire is emailing the application packet, per position description instructions. She could have also scanned in her signature.

## <u>Notes</u>