

Résumé & Cover Letter Guide

Work Experience

Senior Physician Business Manager

- Assisting doctors during surgical procedures.
- Performing minor surgical operations as approved and authorized by the doctor.
- Assisting patient health by interviewing patients and performing physical examinations.
- Performing vital diagnostic tests on patients and evaluating test results.
- Preparing reports and discussing progress with the attending physician.
- Prescribing medications and lab tests as an attending physician.
- Routine care visit post-operative.

Physician Assistant

- Assisted patient health by interviewing patients and performing physical examinations.
- Performed vital diagnostic tests on patients and evaluated test results.
- Prepared reports and discussed progress with the attending physician.
- Prescribed medications and lab tests as an attending physician.
- Routine care visit post-operative.

UConn

CENTER FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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WHAT IS A RÉSUMÉ?

A résumé is a document that is used as a personal marketing tool to convey your relevant skills and experiences to a particular audience. You will use a résumé at all different stages of your collegiate career including applying to part-time jobs, on-campus leadership positions, internships, graduate school programs, full-time jobs, and more. If you do not have an intended use for a résumé at this time, it is still recommended you create one as early as possible in your college career. Doing so will allow you to use it as a road map that can help identify skills you already have and which ones you want to develop throughout your time at UConn.

There are different life stages of a résumé and no two résumés will ever look the same. So how do you know where to begin? First, consider the reason you are writing your résumé; is it to apply to a job? Or are you just writing one for a class assignment? Either way, it is important to understand who your audience is so you can make your document appeal to them!

The table below outlines the three major types of résumés you will create throughout your lifetime. It provides guidance on the type of content that should be included as well as examples of where you might use those types of résumés.

Résumé Type	Description	Purpose	Page Length
Primary Document	A list of all experiences you've had dating back as far as you can recall. This document will be used to inform all additional résumés you write.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are the only one who will see this document 	No limit
Industry Specific	A document tailored to a specific industry/academic focus. This is where you will highlight the general skills and experiences that are sought after/helpful to possess in that industry/area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career Fairs Informational Interviews Involvement Fairs Student Clubs/ Organizations 	One page, possibly two, depending on the industry and level of schooling
Position Specific	A document tailored to a specific job or admissions committee. This is where you will highlight the specific skills and experiences that are being sought after by that organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internship/Job application Graduate School application Letter of Recommendation request 	One page, possibly two, depending on the industry and level of schooling

CONSTRUCTING A RÉSUMÉ

A typical reader only spends about 10-15 seconds skimming a résumé. Therefore, it is important to make sure your résumé looks polished, presentable, and emphasizes the most relevant content in a way that best grabs your audiences' attention.

FORMATTING

While résumé writers always have creative freedom when it comes to the final product of their document, there are a few general rules you should follow when formatting your document.

Margins should be equal on all sides of the page; between 0.5 inch and 1.0 inch

Font size should be between 10 and 12 point

Use a universal font like Times New Roman or Garamond

Avoid the use of templates containing tables and grids

Avoid abbreviations except for states and universal acronyms

Your name can be 1 to 2 points larger than the rest of the text

Maintain consistency with font and text styles throughout the document

Files should preferably be saved as a .doc or .docx file; PDFs should be used only if needed

Ensure there are no spelling errors or general mistakes – do not rely on spellcheck

ORGANIZING CONTENT

The physical placement of content on the résumé is just as important as what is being written. Since we all read top to bottom, you want to make sure the most relevant information appears as high on the document as possible and descends in order of relevance to keep your reader engaged. Ask yourself the following three questions to determine how you should prioritize the order of content on your résumé:

1 What does my reader Need to know?

This information should occupy the first third of your résumé and include all the details your reader NEEDS to know about you to determine if they should continue reading the rest of the document. The information contained in this section should include:

- Contact Information
- Résumé Objective/Summary (if applicable)
- Education
- Skills and Certifications (if relevant to the use of the résumé)

2 What does my reader Want to know?

This information should occupy the second third/middle of your résumé and include all the details your reader WANTS to know about your skills and experiences as they relate to the opportunity. The information contained in this section could include experiences such as (but are not limited to):

- Relevant Work/Internship Experience
- Shadowing Experience
- Research Experience
- Academic Projects

3 What might my reader find Nice to know?

This information should occupy the bottom third of your résumé and should include all the details your reader might find NICE to know. This includes extra skill sets beyond the minimum requirements or unique experiences that set you apart from other applicants. The information contained in this section could include experiences such as (but not limited to):

- Leadership/Volunteer Experience
- Campus Involvement
- Presentations and Conferences
- Skills and Certifications (if not immediately relevant to the use of the résumé)

RÉSUMÉ CATEGORIES

Résumé categories (or Section Headers) are title lines that attract your reader's eyes to relevant content areas of your résumé. We have outlined some examples of these categories below, but this list is not inclusive of the many categories you could choose to use. While some of these categories are required, others are just strongly recommended or optional. To learn more about which categories you could consider using on your résumé, schedule a 20-minute Undergraduate Résumé Critique appointment with a member of our staff.

Required Sections

These sections should always be included on your résumé:

Contact Information

Education

Skills

Experience Sections

Past experiences are always something you want to display on a résumé as they can demonstrate the skills and competencies you possess. These experiences come in many shapes and forms and are not limited solely to work experience. These are examples of various section headers you could include on a résumé:

Objective/Summary

Related Coursework

Honors and Awards

Work Experience

Related Experience

Extracurricular/Co-Curricular Activities

Certifications

Academic Projects

Volunteer Experience

Leadership Experience

Military Experience

Research Experience

Internship Experience

Teaching Experience

Clinical Experience

Job Shadow Experience

Presentations

Publications

Conferences

Activities

Interests

Do Not Include

The following sections should not be used on a résumé:

References

Headshot

Age/DOB

Marital Status

DEMONSTRATING CAREER READINESS

Whether you are learning to write your first résumé or are working to enhance an existing one, your document should show the reader why you are the best fit for their opportunity. This includes demonstrating your level of career readiness as well as the transferable skills you possess. But what exactly is the difference between these two things? Being “Career Ready” means you have developed and can demonstrate ways in which you possess the eight Career Readiness Competencies that employers deem necessary for lifelong career success. **These competencies are the larger concepts that include, and sometimes overlap with, the multiple transferable skills that ensure a successful transition into the workforce and other post-graduation opportunities.** As you read through this guidebook you will see examples of how to incorporate the Career Readiness Competencies and transferable skills into your résumé through the use of action verbs.

CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES

Adapted from the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE), along with input from employers across all industries.

Career & Self Development

Proactively develop oneself and one’s career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one’s strength and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one’s organization.

Communication

Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

Critical Thinking

Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Equity & Inclusion

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Professionalism

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Transferable skills are abilities, attributes, and personal qualities that are learned and transferred from one experience to the next. This could be through academic projects, part/full-time jobs, internships, volunteer experience, extracurricular activities, etc.

Administrative

Identifying resources, delegating tasks, and initiating new ideas

Analytical

Compiling, sorting, and analyzing data

Creative

Creating and designing new concepts or methods, or adding to existing ones

Critical Thinking

Making reasonable judgments that are well thought out after analyzing and evaluating a situation, event, or experience

Customer Service

Working with the public and interacting with customers with professionalism and efficiency

Interpersonal

Interacting effectively with others

Leadership

Motivating and leading a group toward a common goal

Organizational

Using time, energy, and resources in an effective way in order to accomplish tasks and achieve goals

Persuasion

Changing a person's attitude or behavior toward a project, idea, object, or other person(s)

Problem Solving

Recognizing an issue and identifying ways to solve the problem

Quantitative

Sorting, analyzing, and applying mathematics to numbers and other data

Teaching

Transferring knowledge and skills to others

Teamwork

Collaborating with others in order to accomplish a goal or task

Technologies

Using appropriate technology to accomplish a task

Time Management

Using one's time effectively or productively

Verbal & Written Communication

Listening and expressing one's self with words and communicating ideas and concepts in writing

WRITING BULLET POINTS

Bullet point statements serve as personal sales pitches or impact statements that help a reader understand how your individual skills and experiences relate to the opportunity they are looking to fill. Your bullet points will also demonstrate to the reader that you possess the essential career competencies they are looking for. These statements are typically one to two lines in length and do not contain personal pronouns. They are also tense specific; if the experience occurred in the past, the bullet should be written in past tense. Follow the steps below to help develop bullet points for your résumé.

STEP 1: BRAINSTORM

Think about the skills and competencies you want your readers to know about you. These could be broad industry-related skills or tailored/unique skills.

STEP 2: CONSTRUCT YOUR BULLETS

Each bullet you write should include three main elements about the experience you participated in:

What You Did

What was one responsibility you had or one task you performed?

How You Did It

How did you complete that task? What transferable skills, technical skills, or career competencies did you use?

Why You Did It

Why was it important for you to use those skills to perform that task? Explain the impact you made to the organization or people benefiting from your work.

When starting the beginning phases of bullet development, it can often be helpful to start by making a list of all the WHATs first, and then going back to fill in the HOWs and the WHYs.

STEP 3: SHOW, DON'T TELL

Use action verbs to show your reader how you used the transferable/technical skills outlined in step 2. Each bullet statement you write should start with a strong action verb and have at least one or two more incorporated throughout it.

STEP 4: QUANTIFY IF APPROPRIATE

Consider adding quantification elements or technical elements to your bullet statements to fully showcase your impacts and accomplishments.

This example is based off the roles and responsibilities of a UConn Center for Career Development staff member who conducts résumé critiques

Step 1	I want/need to showcase teaching and communication skills along with leadership and communication competencies.		
Step 2	What	How	Why
	Read résumés and give feedback	using teaching skills and verbal communication skills	so students can find jobs
Step 3	Educate students on the concepts of résumé writing	by demonstrating bullet development and formatting techniques	to help convey relevant skills and experiences to employers
Step 4	Educate 300 undergraduate students on the concepts of résumé writing	by demonstrating bullet development and Microsoft Word formatting techniques	to help convey relevant skills and experiences to employers during the job search process

***Writing bullet statements takes time and you may write several drafts before finalizing one you think best resonates with your audience.*

Action Verbs

Action verbs are the part of a bullet point statement that demonstrate your transferable skills and career readiness aptitude to the reader. Effectively demonstrating your competencies and skill sets through carefully chosen action verbs can help set you apart from other applicants and increase your odds of being considered for an opportunity.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Advise	Adapt	Administer	Approve	Arrange	Control	Procure	Distribute
Coordinate	Establish	Order	Organize	Plan	Process	Recall	Exchange
Purchase	Reconcile	Record	Require	Review	Support	Report	Compose
Schedule	Edit	Proofread	Sort	Consolidate	Maintain	Identify	Operate
Activate	Return	Acquire	Collect	Compile	Deliver	Initiate	Notify

ANALYTICAL

Analyze	Appraise	Ascertain	Assess	Audit	Balance	Theorize	Target
Budget	Calculate	Clarify	Compare	Decipher	Derive	Compile	Forecast
Diagnose	Estimate	Evaluate	Examine	Finance	Form	Sort	Conclude
Improve	Increase	Inquire	Inspect	Measure	Qualify	Fabricate	Test
Quantify	Rate	Reconcile	Regulate	Survey	Synthesize	Detect	Verify

CREATIVITY

Adapt	Forge	Create	Design	Develop	Display	Modernize	Stimulate
Exhibit	Illustrate	Innovate	Invent	Perform	Produce	Redesign	Improvise
Publicize	Revitalize	Shape	Stage	Visualize	Construct	Renovate	Imagine
Diversify	Broaden	Conceive	Explore	Fashion	Conceptualize		

CRITICAL THINKING

Analyze	Annotate	Anticipate	Devise	Discover	Evaluate	Reflect	Study
Formulate	Interpret	Investigate	Measure	Qualify	Quantify	Trace	Survey
Record	Research	Search					

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Advocate	Advise	Aide	Alleviate	Assure	Clarify	Tend	Serve
Coach	Counsel	Enable	Encourage	Foster	Guide	Train	Support
Help	Listen	Provide	Resolve	Accommodate			

INTERPERSONAL

Collaborate	Compete	Contribute	Cooperate	Coordinate	Ensure	Represent	Relate
Interact	Intervene	Involve	Join	Mediate	Negotiate	Resolve	Include
Network	Participate	Promote	Recognize	Refer			

LEADERSHIP

Accomplish	Achieve	Assign	Chair	Coach	Supervise	Train	Reinforce
Conduct	Contract	Convey	Delegate	Designate	Direct	Validate	Sanction
Enforce	Enlist	Excel	Execute	Exercise	Exhibit	Celebrate	Spearhead
Facilitate	Finance	Focus	Forecast	Generate	Guide	Champion	Strategize
Implement	Initiate	Instill	Institute	Launch	Lead	Unite	Succeed
Manage	Mentor	Mobilize	Project	Provide	Officiate	Commission	

ORGANIZATIONAL

Arrange	Catalog	Categorize	Classify	Collate	Collect	Systemize	Schedule
Compile	Coordinate	Design	Document	Group	Integrate	Tailor	Simplify
Inventory	Locate	Maintain	Modify	Order	Organize	Update	Preserve
Plan	Prepare	Prioritize	Reorganize				

PERSUASION

Acquire	Commit	Elicit	Empower	Encourage	Influence	Unite	Stimulate
Inspire	Lead	Mentor	Motivate	Persuade	Recruit	Promote	Suggest
Sell	Solicit						

PROBLEM SOLVING

Adjust	Allocate	Change	Complete	Conclude	Control	Address	Reform
Define	Deliver	Distribute	Establish	Expand	Expedite	Utilize	Select
Implement	Improvise	Investigate	Maintain	Monitor	Obtain	Stage	Solve
Plan	Recommend						

QUANTITATIVE

Analyze	Quantify	Code	Compute	Index	Balance	Generate	Formulate
Audit	Budget	Calculate	Finance	Measure	Rate	Interpret	Study
Synthesize	Evaluate	Diagnose	Budget	Validate	Record	Trace	Qualify
Test	Verify						

TEACHING

Coach	Critique	Educate	Grade	Inform	Instruct	Encourage	Enable
Lecture	Correct	Mentor	Model	Teach	Tutor	Evaluate	Stimulate
Facilitate	Guide	Train	Empower	Counsel	Advise		

TEAMWORK

Collaborate	Contribute	Coordinate	Partner	Unite	Engage	Attend	Advise
Respect	Listen	Adapt	Represent	Support	Advocate	Share	Correspond
Augment	Liaise	Volunteer	Cultivate	Assist	Cooperate	Rally	Relay
Supplement	Acknowledge						

TECHNOLOGICAL

Code	Compute	Develop	Diagnose	Install	Operate	Fabricate	Interface
Program	Record	Restore	Design	Quantify	Test	Model	Assemble
Measure	Trace	Operate	Inventory	Schedule	Systemize	Simulate	Engineer

TIME MANAGEMENT

Balance	Manage	Coordinate	Plan	Prioritize	Schedule	Organize	Minimize
Strategize	Budget	Delegate	Synchronize				

VERBAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Brief	Author	Urge	Compose	Correspond	Draft	Report	Publicize
Edit	Outline	Interpret	Translate	Revise	Proofread	Summarize	Promote
Publish	Review	Write	Address	Advertised	Convey	Represent	Present
Describe	Discuss	Explain	Express	Inform	Negotiate	Communicate	

RÉSUMÉ SAMPLE

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

City, State | (555) 555-5555

first.last@uconn.edu | linkedin.com/in/customURL

OBJECTIVE

To obtain an internship position with a youth development program emphasizing well-developed communication skills, problem-solving experience, and knowledge of human development

EDUCATION

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Bachelor of Science, Sociology

May 20XX

Relevant Courses: Sociology: Social Well-Being, Deviant Behavior, Social Welfare and Social Work, Urban Sociology

SKILLS

Certifications: CPR Certified (American Red Cross), Expires 20XX

Computer: Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint; Google Docs, Slides, Sheets; NCR RealPOS 82XRT (Point of Sale System)

Language: Fluent in Twi, Proficient in French

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Community Health Resources, Windsor, CT

Foster Care Support Intern

August 20XX – Present

- Moderated weekly group counseling sessions with youth ages 7-17 to support well-being
- Facilitated educational activities involving health, exercise, and nutrition for children aged 8-12 to promote physical fitness and wellness

Academic Achievement Center, First Year Programs & Learning Communities, UConn, Storrs, CT

UConn Connects Peer Mentor

January 20XX – May 20XX

- Served as a mentor to six college students on academic probation to teach academic success skills such as time management, learning strategies, and facilitate a connection to other campus resources
- Maintained regular communication and conducted weekly meetings with mentees about programs, services, and resources which contributed to academic success

WORK EXPERIENCE

JCPenney, Manchester, CT

Sales Associate

August 20XX – Present

- Ensure organized and inviting store by arranging display tables and returning merchandise to appropriate racks
- Remain knowledgeable on products offered and discuss available in-store and online options with customers
- Follow and achieve department sales goals on a monthly, quarterly and yearly basis helping store retain status as a top sales producer in the district

Dunkin' Donuts, Manchester, CT

CT Cashier and Crew Member

September 20XX – August 20XX

- Complied with inventory control procedures to maintain quality standards
- Correctly processed POS purchases and adhered to service delivery expectations as set by corporate offices
- Teamed up with co-workers to ensure fast, efficient, and proper customer service

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Hands on Hartford, Hartford, CT, Volunteer

August 20XX – Present

South Park Inn, Willimantic, CT, Volunteer

May 20XX – September 20XX

APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS (ATS)

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are software programs used by companies to expedite the recruiting process. ATS serve many functions but are primarily used to scan applicant résumés and highlight the most qualified candidates based on relevant key words, skills, experience, location, and more. The way you write and format your résumé can have a big impact on how successful your résumé will be at passing through the filtering process.

HOW TO KNOW IF AN EMPLOYER USES AN ATS

Over 90% of Fortune 500 companies report using Applicant Tracking Systems and they are gaining popularity among smaller companies as well. While some organizations may use the same ATS, the software versions they utilize, or the way in which those systems are set to evaluate a résumé, may be different. The table below outlines some of the more commonly used ATS software.

JazzHR	VidCruiter	Greenhouse	Breezy	BambooHR
Jobvite	Freshteam	Arcoro	ClearCompany	Oracle Taleo
WorkDay	Homegrown	Brassring	ExactHire	Hireology

While there is not a hard and fast way to determine if an organization is using an Applicant Tracking System, there are some indicators you could look for. To start, try looking at the application portal's URL as it may display a separate software name like one of the examples listed above. You can also look for a designation or icon on the webpage itself saying the system is "powered by ___", or simply outlining the software's image.



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TIPS FOR OPTIMIZING ATS RESULTS

Because you may not know which version of ATS is being used or the parameters your résumé is being evaluated against, there will never be a fool proof way to "beat the ATS". However, there are steps you can take to make sure your résumé is as optimized as much as possible.

Save your résumé as a .doc or .docx file

Avoid the use of templates, tables, grids, and columns

Do not write content in a header or footer

Mirror language from the position description in your résumé (do not copy and paste)

Write an objective to include additional key words or transferrable skills

Spell out your degree but also use the degree abbreviation to increase the odds of a match

Include the word "experience" in each Section Header

Incorporate software names or other application names (e.g. Excel Pivot Tables) into your bullet statements

Visit our website (career.uconn.edu) to view our Résumé Sample Binder for an example of an ATS formatted résumé along with many other samples to use as inspiration when creating your document.

ATS RÉSUMÉ SAMPLE

Stacking contact information and writing it out from left to right, and top to bottom will eliminate errors in ATS parsing. In addition, be sure to include important details like contact information on the document itself as not all ATS software can read information appearing in header or footer

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

123 Street Name, City, ST 01234, 555.555.5555
firstname.lastname@uconn.edu, www.linkedin.com/in/fname-lname

Writing an objective can help increase exact match score by including additional key words/transferable skills

OBJECTIVE

Seeking a software development position with ACE Corporation utilizing excellent technical, creative, and critical thinking skills

EDUCATION

University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Bachelor of Science in Engineering (B.S.E.), May 20XX
Major in Computer Science and Engineering; Minor in Mathematics

Adding the degree's abbreviation will increase the odds of ATS finding an exact match between your document and the job requirements it is looking for

Tianjin University of Finance and Economics, Tianjin, China

Study abroad experience focused on Chinese language and culture, June-August 20XX

Some ATS platforms are unable to read information appearing in lists or columns, therefore it is recommended skills be written out sequentially

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Application Programming: C#, Java, VB.NET, C, MATLAB, Python, Smalltalk, MIPS
Functional Programming: Scheme (LISP), Standard ML, F#
Web Programming: ASP, .NET, PHP, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, JQuery, AngularJS, SOAP, REST
Databases: MySQL, MS, SQL, MongoDB, LINQ, Entity Framework, Microsoft Excel
Cloud Computing: AWS, MS Azure, SaaS, PaaS, IaaS
Mobile Development: Apache Cordova, Ionic, Xamarin
Repository: Git, Team Foundation Server (TFS)

Including the word "experience" in section headers, and specifying the type of experience you are trying to highlight, will help the ATS determine relevancy of content so it can be score accordingly to the job qualifications instead of passing over as irrelevant information

WORK EXPERIENCE

XPRCorp, Inc., Rocky Hill, CT

Software Consultant Intern, May 20XX - August 20XX

- Maintained enterprise software to facilitate health insurance data analytics for over 100,000 patients
- Optimized queries to search through client SQL database saving 180 seconds per transaction
- Developed an ASP MVC website to manage 25 Active Directory accounts on a Rackspace cloud sever
- Collaborated with clients on-site to establish technical requirements and software product details
- Worked independently and in team environments operating with Agile Scrum practices

Incorporating hard skills into bullet statements increases the likelihood of the ATS recognizing an exact match and also allows the recruiter to later determine the strength of that skill

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

School of Engineering, Storrs, CT

Design Project for Auerfarm 4-H Educational Center in Bloomfield, CT, September 20XX - May 20XX

- Created a mobile app for a farm using Xamarin to help families navigate the land and stay aware of relevant news and events across multiple devices
- Utilized Google Maps API to provide an interactive app displaying nearby landmarks based on a visitor's location
- Deployed a scalable Windows server to host a secure administrative website and handle dynamic app data
- Solution assists Auerfarm to increase community involvement and provide quality services to children

Computer Security, Storrs, CT

Project: Website hosted with XAMPP Technologies, February 20XX - April 20XX

- Developed a secure instant messaging website PHP to implement access control
- Applied modern cryptographic techniques to encrypt, hash, and salt sensitive information
- Wrote front-end using Bootstrap and JQuery to provide a responsive and user-friendly interface

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Alpha Kappa Lambda Fraternity, Storrs, CT

Organization Member, February 20XX - Present

- Founding father of Gamma Pi chapter with a mission to transform Greek culture on campus
- Helped fundraise over \$10,000 for UConn's Violence Against Women Protection Program
- Participated in monthly accreditation workshops in pursuit of University and National recognition

Not all ATS software are able to read special characters or images, therefore it is recommended to remove decorative formatting options like tables, shapes, page borders, pictures, etc...

WRITING YOUR COVER LETTER

WHAT IS A COVER LETTER?

A cover letter is a document that serves as an introduction to your résumé and provides the reader with additional context about your skills and qualifications when considering your application. Not only does it reiterate your enthusiasm and qualifications for the opportunity, but it also serves as mini writing sample which can be extremely helpful when applying for a position that requires strong written communication skills.

CONSTRUCTING A COVER LETTER

Much like your position-specific résumé, a cover letter should be uniquely tailored for each opportunity you apply to. Researching the organization and position prior to writing your letter will provide helpful guidance on content to include and attributes to draw attention to. In addition, here are a few other general rules you should follow when formatting your cover letter.

Margins should be equal on all sides of the page; between 0.5 inch and 1.0 inch

Font size should be between 10 and 12 point

Use a universal font like Times New Roman or Garamond

Files should preferably be saved as a .doc or .docx file; PDFs should be used only if needed

Ensure there are no spelling errors or general mistakes – do not rely on spellcheck

Use formal business letter formatting or mirror your résumé's contact section

Limit the document to one page

Do not indent paragraphs

Use direct greetings when possible "Dear Taylor Smith" or "Dear Search Committee", instead of "To Whom it May Concern"

Avoid the use of cover letter templates containing tables and grids

Avoid abbreviations except for states and universal acronyms

CONTACT SECTION

There are two options for arranging the contact section on your cover letter: using formal business letter formatting or mirroring the contact section of your résumé.

1 Formal business-style cover letters should follow a standard Block format which aligns all text to the left margin and includes an outgoing address (your contact information), the date, an incoming address (your recipient's contact information), followed by the salutation.

2 If mirroring the contact section of your résumé, your contact information should be centered on the page (or however it appears on your résumé) with the date, recipient's contact information, and salutation aligned to the left margin.

Jonathan Husky
123 Husky Way
Storrs, CT 06269

January 1, 20XX

Big Time Company, Inc.
Attn: Taylor Smith
5050 Main Street
New Haven, CT 06501

Dr. Taylor Smith:

Jonathan Husky
123 Husky Way, Storrs, CT 06269 | (860) 555-1234
Jonathan.Husky@uconn.edu | LinkedIn.com/in/JonathanHusky

January 1, 20XX

Big Time Company, Inc.
Attn: Taylor Smith
5050 Main Street
New Haven, CT 06501

Dr. Taylor Smith:

ORGANIZING CONTENT

When constructing the body of your cover letter, the content should be separated into four main paragraphs based on the skills and/or experiences you wish to highlight to your reader. These paragraphs should be written without indentation and contain the sentiments outlined below.

Introduction Paragraph

- Why are you writing this cover letter? Specifically mention the position and company to which you are applying
- Make a connection with the reader by mentioning a common professional acquaintance, sharing the name of the company representative you spoke with at a career fair, or expressing how a certain aspect of the position or organization related to you personally
- Conclude the paragraph with a statement that identifies the skills, knowledge, and/or experience(s) you plan to discuss in the next two paragraphs

Body Paragraphs

Focus on one skill or experience you want to write about in each paragraph, then make sure that each one...

- Explains why you are a strong fit for the position and organization
- Shows that you possess the skills/qualifications listed in the position description by providing specific examples of past work, internship, classroom, volunteer, or leadership experiences
- Illustrates why/how your past experiences and skills can add value to the organization

Closing Paragraph

- Thank the reader for reviewing your application materials
- Reiterate your interest in the position/organization by referring to them by name
- Express your willingness to follow up with more information if needed
- Provide your phone number and email address for contact if your contact section does not mirror your résumé

Valediction (signature line)

- Leave a paragraph space after your closing paragraph for your valediction; sentiments such as “Sincerely”, “Kind regards”, “With appreciation”, and “Respectfully” can all be used and should be followed with a comma
- Leave at least two to three paragraph spaces between your valediction and your typed name to include a printed signature – even if you are not physically printing and signing the letter

COVER LETTER SAMPLE

Jonathan Husky
123 Any Street
Storrs, CT 06269

May 12, 20XX

UConn Center for Career Development
Attn: Undergraduate Student Internship Program
233 Glenbrook Road
Storrs, CT 06269

Dear Hiring Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm I am writing to apply to the Career Intern position (Job #123456) I found posted on Handshake. As an education major, I feel this position would allow me to contribute the strong interpersonal and communication skills the Center for Career Development is seeking while also providing an opportunity to build the mentorship and teaching skills that are required in my future profession.

In my part-time job as Customer Service Clerk at Price Chopper, I have gained extensive customer service skills that I am confident can be applied to the Career Intern position. As a Customer Service Clerk, I am responsible for creating a pleasant shopping experience for the customer by answering questions related to our weekly sales flyer, helping them navigate the store layout to find desired items, and resolving issues and complaints they may have in an empathetic manner. A key to my success is demonstrating strong active listening skills to ensure I fully understand their individual needs and can provide personalized assistance accordingly. I feel these traits would be an asset to the Career Intern position as no two students are the same, and providing support and resources focused on their specific career-related questions and goals is an essential part of what the Career Center offers.

Additionally, I currently serve as the Vice President for UConn TEACH (Teaching Enthusiasts and Advocates for Community Hope); a student organization focused on equipping future educators with the tools and resources needed to create inclusive learning environments that ignite curiosity and promote lifelong learning. As part of my responsibilities, I oversee the development and evaluation processes of TEACH's programs and initiatives as well as represent TEACH at on-campus engagements, meetings, and involvement fairs. These unique experiences would set me up well to conduct one-on-one peer advising sessions as a Career Intern as I have become skilled at delivering constructive and goal-oriented feedback to individuals that builds trust and engagement throughout the process.

I look forward to contributing my skills and experiences to the Career Intern position at the Center for Career Development and welcome the opportunity to expand upon these further in a future interview. I can be reached by email at Jonathan.Husky@uconn.edu or by phone at (555) 555-5555. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Husky

UConn

CENTER FOR
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

www.career.uconn.edu

career@uconn.edu

