

RESUME ADVICE

City, State | Phone | Email | Customized LinkedIn url (optional) | link to portfolio (optional)

SUMMARY

- Think of these as the conclusions you want the reader to walk away with having read your resume
- They need to be specific to the role you are applying to, so write them after you have tailored your resume
- They need to be supported by evidence in the experience section of your resume
- Bullet points work best, rather than a single paragraph, and consider having 3-5 takeaways

EDUCATION

Degree, Institution, location

Expected graduation date

- Relevant courses: these can be good keywords, and you should customize and prioritize your list of course based on the job description. Don't abbreviate course names (e.g., Advanced Statistics, not Adv. Stats.)
- GPA can be shared here, but not all employers or industries prioritize this

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

PhD student, University of Pennsylvania, location

20xx-present

- The work you do as a student at Penn can be included within the "Relevant Experience" section
- Anything you do as part of your academic research can be stated as a skill (e.g., researched, analyzed, gained knowledge of, collaborated with, developed novel approach, gathered data, presented findings, etc.)
- Follow the "Skill – Context – Outcome" format when writing bullet points, and match the skills you describe to what is listed in the job/internship description

Master's student, University of Pennsylvania, location

20xx-20xx

- Even work that you do for class projects/homework can still be stated as a skill or knowledge area – this is especially helpful when you are applying for internships, as you need to be a student to be an intern!
- Take a look at your dates – is the spacing and hyphen size consistent in every case?

Intern, XYZ firm, New York

20xx-20xx

- Even if your specific internship is in a different industry from a role you are applying to, you likely have a wide range of transferable skills (e.g., project management, learning quickly, collaboration, communication, problem solving) – try to describe the skills more than the context so that you emphasize what is most relevant to your reader

Member, Penn Student Data Science Club, location

20xx-20xx

- If you are a member of student club where you are working on project relevant to a role you are applying to (e.g., consulting with a client/employer), then the skills used can be listed as relevant experience too
- Not every resume needs to be one page, but the first page of your resume needs to prioritize experiences and skills that are relevant to the role
- If you were a student leader running a club – this experience can be shared as "Leadership Experience"

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Member, ABC Student Club

20xx-20xx

- Remember you don't have to be leader of a group to show leadership skills
- Leadership experience makes you interesting, and demonstrates future leadership potential, but if the roles you played are very different from the role you are applying to – keep this section nice and concise.

SKILLS

- **Technical:** You can just list skill keywords here – listing the ones the reader cares about the most first.
- **Programming:** You don't need to list proficiencies – but if the position description lists skills they want to see in candidates, then you should list those skills and also show them in action in the experience section
- **Languages:** Your spoken language skills can be listed here too. The skills section reminds the reader of the wide range of skills you bring – and works well at the end of the resume

COVER LETTER ADVICE

Your name
Email; Phone

Name of company (mostly to remind you!)
You don't really need their address any more

Dear Name of Contact (or a non-gendered, generic title such as "Hiring Manager")

You are aiming for a 1-page, customized cover letter that adds to the customized resume that you will be sending. Everything mentioned in the cover letter should be echoed by something in the resume, but not everything in the resume needs to be repeated in the cover letter. In general terms, the cover letter is a "why" document. Why are your experiences particularly relevant for this role, why do you want the role, and why do you want to work at this organization. Because you are writing in paragraphs rather than bullet points, the narrative form of the cover letter gives you more opportunity to tell stories, and to use language that is energizing (e.g., "it was exciting to work on..." or "I really enjoyed learning about..."). These stories that include energizing language give the reader a clearer perspective about the type of person you are when you are working, not just what you have worked on. The following sample paragraphs are just examples of how you can approach your letter.

OPENING PARAGRAPH

"I am applying for the position of XYZ that was advertised on Handshake" – it isn't the most original opening, but it tells the reader everything they need to know to understand the rest of the letter. "As a Master's student in Criminology at the University of Pennsylvania, I have a deep knowledge of ABC and XYZ through my coursework. With 3 years of experience managing research projects in a highly collaborative non-profit, and a clear understanding of quantitative tools necessary to leverage data to inform program decision-making, I am excited to bring these skills and my passion for community building to this role". The key points you are making in the opening paragraph are the ones you will expand on in the body paragraphs. If the reader only reads your opening paragraph, they should still have enough information on your fit for the role to want to interview you. If you make the statement *"I believe that my combination of skills and knowledge are a good fit"*. Then make sure that you have shared some context to those skills and knowledge beforehand, otherwise the reader won't be able to share this belief.

BODY PARAGRAPHS

The 2nd paragraph is the best place to make your strongest pitch for the value you bring to the role, and so starting with your most relevant set of experiences (even if they are not the most recent) can be a good strategy. If you think of each body paragraph being a somewhat thematic, then you can start each one off with a broader summary of relevant experiences aligned with the theme before telling a specific story. So if your first theme was focused on demonstrating your data analytics skills, you might start off by saying something like *"I have developed a rich set of quantitative data skills that I have enjoyed using across different projects, including analyzing financial trends as part of my XXYZ class using Python, and taking the lead as the data person for a pro-bono student consulting project with an AI start-up firm. One of the most exciting big data projects I have worked on was as an Intern at ABC, where I was challenged to do ABC within a 1-week period. The innovative approach I took to solving this was XYZ, which drew on my knowledge of 123. It was great to be able to partner with the Senior Manager of data on this project, and I recently heard from my supervisor that they were still utilizing some of my methods for their data!"*

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

This paragraph can answer the question "Why this position? Why this organization?". The first ¾ of the letter focuses on what you bring to the role. Once the reader has seen the value you can bring, they will then be more interested to know why you are excited to work with them. This is a great place to namedrop contacts at the employer you may have networked with, or met at a career fair, and to state authentically why aspects of the role will be exciting for you. *"You can reach me at EMAIL or PHONE if you have any questions or need any additional information. I look forward to hearing from you"*

Yours sincerely,
Your advisors at Penn Career Services