

CENTER FOR CAREER AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT GUIDE



MORAVIAN
COLLEGE



RESUME AND COVER LETTERS GUIDE

Have further questions?

Please contact the Center for Career and Civic Engagement at 610-861-1509, stop by the office or send an email to careercivic@moravian.edu.

HOURS OF OPERATION: Monday- Friday from 8:00am-4:30pm.

TYPES OF RÉSUMÉS

Deciding which type of résumé to use will depend upon your current goals and your particular experiences.

Chronological

Easier and more popular style. It presents a candidate's background by discussing each job or activity in reverse chronological order. It emphasizes job titles and organization names.

Chronological résumés are generally used by individuals with a stable work history. Beginning with the most recent experiences and going backwards, this format provides the employer with the position held, name and location of organization, dates worked, and specific job responsibilities.

Functional

Focuses on skills and qualifications. Categories are defined by what the candidate would like to highlight. Individuals use this format when they want to highlight their skills, have gaps in their employment records, are making a career change, or are concerned about the number of jobs they have had. If you are considering using a functional résumé, it may be best to use a combination of the two résumé types to avoid employers' questioning what you may be hiding.

Combination

Uses elements of both chronological and functional. Highlights skill areas and related chronological work experience.

Federal

Structured differently than a resume for the private sector, Federal Resumes often require a Social Security Number, citizenship status, employer contact information, and details pertaining to prior Federal or military experience. KSA (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities) statements are also an important factor in the Federal Application process.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

This document varies depending on the career field and is typically used in fields of academics or research. A CV provides great detail about academic research, publications and professional presentation experiences, and is primarily used when applying for scientific or research positions, professor-level academic positions or fellowship or grant applications.

SECTIONS OF THE RÉSUMÉ

Here are categories you can include on your résumé. You can add or subtract from these as you see necessary or change their order or name as needed. Jot down any information you can think of that might fit into a section. It is easier to cut back on your information than to stretch it.

Contact Information

- Full name (without nicknames)
- Both local campus address and permanent address if you would like to (this can be helpful if you are applying for positions in your hometown)
- Email address that is professional and checked regularly.
- Phone number that is the best way to reach you. If this is your cell number, be sure that your outgoing message is professional and that you only answer if you are able to carry on a professional conversation. It might not be best to list a home phone number if you do not live there during the academic year.

Job Objective

According to many experts, this section is no longer necessary for a new professional, and most graduates are looking for a “challenging position that will utilize their skills.” Unless you are looking for something very specific, a general statement about your professional objectives can be included in your cover letter. If you decide to include an objective, it should be a brief statement indicating what type of position you want. It should be as descriptive as possible without being narrowing. It should also be realistic and focus on what you offer rather than on what you want to gain.

Bad objective example: A job in the field of education where I can gain experience

Good objective example: To obtain a secondary math teacher position in Bethlehem Area School District that will allow me to utilize my communication skills and previous teaching experience.

Education

- List any educational experiences; starting from the most recent and working chronologically back.
- Each item should list the name and location (city, state) of the institution attended, degree, major(s), graduation date, minor(s), and certifications in specialty areas.
- If your grade-point average is 3.0 or above, it should be included in this section. If you are unwilling to list your grades and you are in a field that places emphasis on strong academic performance, prepare for a question during the interview on why your grades are not high.
- You can address concerns regarding your grades in your cover letter. If you have contributed to your educational expenses by working while taking classes, you may list the percentage (i.e., financed 50% of college education).
- An academic awards or honors can also be included in this section.

Additional Skills

List any computer skills, language skills, certifications, etc., that may help to sell you as a potential employee.

Related Experience

- This section is used for experiences that are directly related to your career.
- These should include jobs, internships, externships, volunteer work, and summer employment.
- List each experience, starting with the most recent and working backward.
- Be sure to include: position held, name of organization, city, state, dates worked, and a brief description of your duties.
- List your responsibilities using action verbs and bullet points.

Additional Work Experience

This section is similar to Related Experience; however, the items listed are not directly related to the career path you are seeking. Do not underestimate the importance of this section. Many skills are transferable, such as time management, customer service, communication skills, administrative responsibilities, etc.

Community/Campus Involvement and Leadership

Membership in clubs and organizations, volunteer work, committee work, and other extracurricular activities are included in this section. Be sure to list leadership positions you have held.



QUICK TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE RESUME WRITING

Formatting

- ✓ Trash Templates-open a new, blank document in Word and do not use a resume template.
- ✓ Use the entire page and try to avoid a lot of unused white space.
- ✓ Use one type of clear, easy to read font throughout the document.
- ✓ Keep font size to between 10-12 size for body text and 12-14 size for your name and section headings.
- ✓ Underline, bold and italics should be used sparingly to add emphasis to key areas.
- ✓ Use black text only. Avoid graphics or pictures unless you are applying for design related positions.
- ✓ Keep document to two pages or less, one page is ideal for most majors. If you use a second page, make sure your contact information is at the top of the second page.
- ✓ If two pages, print your resume on one side of the page only and paper clip the pages together (do not staple)
- ✓ Print your resume on light-colored or white paper.
- ✓ Do not include references on your resume. This will be a separate document.
- ✓ Remember to proofread for spelling and grammar errors. Do not rely on spelling and grammar checks.
- ✓ Consistency is key-make sure the formatting is the same throughout the entire document.
- ✓ Watch alignment-make sure bullets and spacing aligns throughout the document.

Content

- ✓ List items in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- ✓ Do not include high school information unless you do not have anything from college to include or unless it is relevant to your career goal.
- ✓ When listing education, include school name, city and state. Below include the type of degree you are earning (Bachelor of Arts not BA) and your major (s), minor(s) and GPA if over 3.0 (be sure not to round off this number).
- ✓ Create separate categories as needed such as: Related Experience, Research Experience, Leadership Experience, Community Involvement, Additional Experience or anything else you think will represent your experiences well to employers.
- ✓ Use action verbs to describe your experiences-be specific and as descriptive as possible.
- ✓ When describing experiences make sure to include outcomes whenever possible.
- ✓ Use past tense for past experiences and present tense for current experiences.
- ✓ Don't lie about or exaggerate your accomplishments
- ✓ Avoid personal pronouns such as "I," "she"
- ✓ Consider using a bullet format instead of writing long paragraphs or sentences
- ✓ Be sure that you are including key words and industry jargon based on your career area of interest. Employers will scan for words that related to the posted job description whenever possible.
- ✓ Make sure to have your resumes reviewed by Center for Career and Civic Engagement staff, faculty and professionals in similar industries.

ACTION VERBS

Adapted	Contracted	Explained	Measured	
Addressed	Contributed	Expressed	Mediated	Reduced
Adjusted	Controlled	Facilitated	Merged	Referred
Administered	Converted	Familiarized	Modeled	Registered
Advertised	Conveyed	Fashioned	Moderated	Rehabilitated
Advocated	Convinced	Forecasted	Modified	Reinforced
Aided	Cooperated	Formulated	Monitored	Reorganized
Allocated	Coordinated	Founded	Motivated	Replaced
Analyzed	Corrected	Furnished	Navigated	Reported
Answered	Corresponded	Generated	Negotiated	Researched
Appointed	Counseled	Guided	Observed	Resolved
Appraised	Customized	Handled	Obtained	Restored
Approved	Debated	Helped	Operated	Responded
Arbitrated	Decided	Hired	Organized	Retrieved
Arranged	Decreased	Hosted	Originated	Reviewed
Articulated	Defined	Illustrated	Outlined	Revised
Assessed	Delegated	Improved	Overhauled	Revitalized
Assigned	Demonstrated	Incorporated	Oversaw	Scheduled
Assisted	Determined	Increased	Participated	Secured
Attained	Designed	Influenced	Performed	Selected
Audited	Developed	Initiated	Persuaded	Shaped
Authored	Diagnosed	Inspected	Photographed	Simplified
Authorized	Directed	Instituted	Planned	Solicited
Balanced	Discussed	Insured	Prepared	Solved
Budgeted	Displayed	Integrated	Presented	Specified
Calculated	Drafted	Interacted	Presided	Spoke
Chaired	Edited	Interpreted	Prevented	Streamlined
Clarified	Educated	Intervened	Prioritized	Strengthened
Coached	Elicited	Interviewed	Produced	Submitted
Collaborated	Eliminated	Introduced	Programmed	Suggested
Communicated	Emphasized	Invented	Projected	Summarized
Composed	Encouraged	Involved	Promoted	Supervised
Computed	Enforced	Joined	Proposed	Supplied
Conceptualized	Enhanced	Judged	Provided	Supported
Condensed	Enlisted	Lectured	Publicized	Synthesized
Conferred	Ensured	Led	Purchased	Translated
Conserved	Entertained	Listened	Qualified	Updated
Considered	Established	Logged	Recommended	Validated
Consolidated	Estimated	Maintained	Reconciled	Verified
Consulted	Executed	Managed	Recorded	Volunteered
Contacted	Expedited	Marketed	Recruited	Wrote

RESUME SAMPLE

Weatherby George Dupree

School: 1200 Main Street, wgd@gmail.com

Permanent: 123 My Street, Anytown, PA 12125, 610-555-1212

Education

Moravian College, Bethlehem, PA

Bachelor of Arts in management, minor in Spanish, May 20XX

GPA: 3.0 in major

Courses: Consumer Behavior, Managerial Finance, Human Resource Management, Investment and Portfolio Theory, Spanish Conversation and Contemporary Life

Related Experience

Financial Management Intern, Merrill Lynch, Mount Laurel, NJ, January-May 20XX

- Created a presentation report including spreadsheets which was adopted as the standard format by brokers in this office.
- Updated and maintained trading activity in spreadsheets for clients.
- Researched specific Value Line reports and performed clerking tasks for brokers.
- Communicated with prospective customers via phone and direct mail.

Secretary, Economics & Business Club, Moravian College, September 20XX-present

- Recorded notes for 10 meetings a semester.
- Designed and maintained web page using Wordpress.

Fund Manager, Amrhein Investment Club, Moravian College, April 20XX-January 20XX

- Gained hands-on experience in the field of investments as part of a group that manages over \$1.3 million.
- Managed Small Cap Fund that consisted of 9 members. Met weekly to discuss current holdings and present ideas for future purchases or sales of stocks and bonds.
- Co-organized trips to the New York Stock Exchange and the Federal Reserve Bank.

Skills

Computer: MS Excel, MS Access, MS Word, Quattro Pro, Paradox, WordPerfect, Lotus Notes, Freelance Graphics

Languages: Spanish (fluent), French (conversational)

Leadership

Student Ambassador, Twenty Six Points, April 20XX-present

- Led on-campus tours for prospective students as part of team of 26 students that were nominated and selected by professionals in Enrollment Management.
- Represented Moravian College at special recruiting events.

Additional Experience

Cashier, Gap Outlet, Tannersville, PA, Summer 20XX

- Controlled cash drawer of more than \$5000.00.
- Assisted customers in purchases of clothing and accessories.

Involvement: Student Alumni Association, Accounting Club

RESUME SAMPLE

Cynthia B. Applegate
123 School Road
Bethlehem, PA 18018
(610)123-4567
E-mail: stcba01@moravian.edu

EDUCATION

Moravian College, Bethlehem, PA

Bachelor of Arts in English, May 20XX

Elementary Education Certification

Cumulative GPA: 3.45; Major G.P.A.: 3.63

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Saucon Valley Elementary School, Hellertown, PA

Student Teacher, Fourth Grade (*March – April 20XX*)

- Designed, prepared, and instructed children in Science, Read Aloud, Guided Reading Group, Math, Writing and Spelling
- Integrated computer technology into lessons
- Adapted lessons to fit the needs of students with IEP
- Assisted with parent/teacher conferences
- Wrote weekly newsletter to parents to keep them informed of what lessons were covered each week

Fountain Hill Elementary School, Bethlehem, PA

Student Teacher, First Grade (*January-March 20XX*)

- Developed and taught social studies family unit
- Created and taught science unit on weather
- Used guided reading lessons and reading anthology to foster learning
- Provided accommodations throughout lessons to students with special needs
- Created educational math games and learning centers

Ritter Elementary School, Allentown, PA

Junior Pre-Student Teaching Experience, Second Grade (*March-May 20XX*)

- Designed language arts, social studies and mathematics lessons in accordance with the Pennsylvania State Standards
- Led several hands-on mathematics lessons and activities
- Assumed many daily classroom routine responsibilities

Clearview Elementary School, Bethlehem, PA

Early Field Experience, Kindergarten (*September-December 20XX*)

- Taught a lesson and conducted an activity aligned with an ongoing alphabet unit
- Read aloud books to the entire class on a regular basis

Marvine Elementary School, Bethlehem, PA

Early Field Experience, Third Grade (*January-April 20XX*)

- Taught whole group language arts lessons
- Observed and completed running records on individual students

Cynthia B. Applegate

RELATED EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

Allentown YMCA Summer Camp, Allentown, PA

Counselor (*June-August 20XX-20XX*)

- Provided care and an activity-oriented day for ten year old campers
- Planned and taught theme-based sporting activities, arts and crafts, team-building and songs

Head Start, Allentown, PA

Teacher's Aide (*January-May 20XX*)

- Helped children develop better learning and socialization skills

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Moravian College Residence Life Staff

- Upper and Underclassmen Senior Resident Advisor (*September 20XX – May 20XX*)
- Resident Advisor (*September 20XX – May 20XX*)

Moravian College Twenty-Six Points Student Ambassador (*January 20XX – May 20XX*)

- Conducted personal and group tours of campus to prospective college students

Athletics Department, Moravian College

Assistant to the Coaches (*September 20XX - May 20XX*)

- Performed office duties including copying, faxing and working with various computer programs
- Created letters and spreadsheets to organize information

HONORS / AWARDS

- Psi Chi (Psychology Honor Society), (*20XX - Present*)
- Kappa Delta Pi (Education Honor Society), (*20XX - Present*)
- Academic Dean's List (*Fall 20XX, Spring 20XX, Fall 20XX*)
- *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges* (*20XX*)

TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint); Macintosh (Appleworks, Claris Home Page 3.0, Inspiration); Additional Proficiency with: Internet Explorer, E-mail, and Smartboard.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Moravian College Campus Community Connection (C3) (*September 20XX – December 20XX*)

- Organized and facilitated activities to assist with campus service projects

RESUME SAMPLE

Nancy Nurse

123 Main Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018
nancynurse@gmail.com 610-555-1212

Objective

To obtain a position as a Registered Nurse at St. Luke's Hospital.

Education

Moravian College, Bethlehem, PA

Bachelor of Science in Nursing, minor in Spanish, May 20XX

GPA: 3.5

Dean's List fall 20XX, spring 2010, fall 20XX

Certifications: advanced critical care modules (ECG, ABG, Hemodynamic Monitoring, Mechanical Ventilation, Fluid and Electrolyte, IV Insertion)

Clinical Rotations

St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, PA, fall 20XX

- Intensive Care Unit, cared for patients with increased ICP, VAC dressing, TPN, colostomy and hemodynamic monitoring.
- Intermediate Critical Care Unit, cared for patients with both continuous and bolus tube feedings, tracheotomies, ventilators and decreased level of consciousness
- Psychiatric and Mental Health nursing
- Participated in observation experiences in open heart surgery, STD clinic, dialysis and EXT

St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, PA, spring 20XX

- OB-GYN, Mother-Baby Unit, Labor and Delivery, Pediatrics, Visiting Nurse Association, flu shot clinic
- Observation experiences in dialysis, operating room and outpatient mental health settings

St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, PA, fall 20XX

- Oncology and Medical-Surgical Unit
- Observation experiences in the pediatric clinic and women's health clinic

Health Care Related Experience

Clinical Nurse Scholar, St. Luke's Hospital, Bethlehem, PA, summer 20XX

- Assisted RN/mentor in coordinating and providing individualized patient care on telemetry unit
- Electronically charted nursing assessments, care plans and interventions
- Learned major duties and responsibilities of the nursing profession

Patient Support Associate, Pocono Medical Center, Scranton, PA, summer and fall 20XX

- Assisted nursing staff in the provision of basic patient care
- Helped patients carry out ADL's, took vital signs and charted

Leadership/Activities

Executive Board member, Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, fall 20XX-present

Twenty Six Points admissions ambassador, Moravian College, spring 2011-fall 20XX

Student Nurse's Association, Moravian College, fall 2010-present

Skills

Language: Spanish (conversational)

Computer: Microsoft Office Suite including Word, Excel and PowerPoint

RESUME SAMPLE

Ima Student

School: 1200 Main Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018, student@moravian.edu

Home: 123 My Street, Anytown, PA 12125, 610-555-1212

Education

Moravian College, Bethlehem, PA

Bachelor of Arts in English, minor in art, May 20XX

GPA: 3.25

Awards: Comenius Scholarship, Founders Scholarship

Related Courses: Business Writing, Public Speaking, News and Feature Writing, Graphic Design for Presentations

Related Experience

Vice President, Zinzendorf Society (English club), Moravian College, 20XX-20XX

- Communicated with faculty through monthly memos; recruited new members.
- Contacted marketing professionals and coordinate speaker presentations for group.
- Organized an annual public relations spring conference at Moravian College through publicity of conference events to the Moravian community and surrounding interested parties.

Marketing Agency Project, Consumer Behavior, Moravian College, Fall 20XX

- Developed a marketing plan for a jewelry company as a member of a 5 person team.
- Conducted extensive research on company to identify target market.
- Created a marketing plan based on research and knowledge of marketing strategies.

Editorial Intern, Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal, Bethlehem, PA, Summer 20XX

- Edited weekly finance column by Susan Jones
- Wrote editorial comments for the retail section of the publication.
- Communicated with staff and external constituents to ensure accuracy of articles.

Skills

Computer: Quark Xpress, Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Dreamweaver, Flash, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint), Filemaker Pro

Language: Spanish (conversational)

Leadership

Secretary, Sigma Tau Delta (national English honor society), Fall 20XX-Present

- Maintain accurate minutes of weekly meetings.
- Serve as liaison to Dean of Students and organization.

Co-Captain, Varsity Basketball, Fall 20XX-Present

- Lead weekly team meetings to prepare for upcoming games.
- Create team unity and spirit through organized activities and practices.

Additional Experience

Camp Counselor, Day Camp, New York, NY, Summer 20XX

- Facilitate group activities for 18 children ages 7-11.
- Schedule events and coordinate programs to develop music and cultural awareness.

Campus Involvement

History Club, Student Alumni Association, Black Student Union

SAMPLE REFERENCE PAGE

Sally S. Student
1234 Resume Road
Anywhere, NJ 19191
609-555-1234
email@home.com

REFERENCES

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Name
Title
Street Address
City, State Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

-
- Do not include your resume. That always goes on a separate page.
 - Be sure to ask permission before including anyone as a reference.
 - Supply them with a copy of your resume so they can write an accurate recommendation letter.
 - References should be professional (supervisors, administrators, faculty, advisors, coaches, etc) rather than personal, character references.
 - Thank them when you are hired, even if you know they were never contacted. Send them a thank you letter with your new, updated resume.
 - Stay in touch with them and let them know how your career is progressing.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE IN THE JOB/INTERNSHIP SEARCH

The following guidelines can be used for e-mail when writing or responding to: potential employers, co-workers, reference requests, and others in your professional network. You will be taken more seriously and will often be given more credibility.

Avoid Common Mistakes:

- Using emoticons (:0)
- Being too informal
- Misspellings and poor grammar
- No capitalization
- Spellings words how they sound: ur = your

Professional e-mail is very different from casual e-mail or texting.

Here are some guidelines to consider when writing an e-mail in which you are job prospecting or applying for a job:

- ✓ Always introduce yourself the same way you would in a cover letter. Dear Mr./Ms. So and So, I am writing in regard to your posting on...for XYZ position in Human Services.
- ✓ Treat your e-mails as if you were writing a professional cover or thank you letter on paper, but be brief.
- ✓ An e-mail to an employer should never just say "see attached." The receiver may not even open the attachment.
- ✓ In the subject line, make it obvious why you are writing: "Application for XYZ" position.
- ✓ Make sure you change the contact name and content according to the person and company to whom you are sending the message.
- ✓ If you are responding to an e-mail, include the original message in the reply, so the receiver can put your e-mail into the correct context. Also, respond within 2 business days.
- ✓ Always spell words correctly.
- ✓ Don't just use spell check. It won't catch words that are spelled correctly, but are misused within the context of the sentence.
- ✓ Never use all capital letters. It can be implied that you are screaming. It is also difficult to read.
- ✓ Think about the message an e-mail address can send. Keep it simple and avoid names similar to "studmuffin" or "partygirl."
- ✓ Read your message carefully. The tone of an e-mail can often be misinterpreted by the way the e-mail is written.
- ✓ Have someone else proofread it before you send it. It may be easier to find errors if you print and review it.
- ✓ Name your document "your name, resume." Employers receive hundreds of resumes via e-mail. If you follow-up by asking if they received it, they won't want to take the time to look through 300 attachments called "resume."
- ✓ If you are attaching your resume, attach it as a pdf. If possible.
- ✓ Do not assume that if an employer is informal that you should be.

Don't rely just on e-mail. E-mails can be lost. Follow-ups can be done via the phone whenever possible.

Your e-mail can be a brief introduction:

To: xtzperson@acccompany.org

From: ggoodwin@moravian.edu

Subject: Application for summer internship

Dear Ms. XYZ,

I am writing in response to the posting on Jobweb.com for a summer information systems/technology internship at ABC Company (Job #123). Please accept my attached resume and letter as an application for this position. My skills and experience closely fit the posted job description, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you,

Gracie Goodwin

Or your e-mail can be your cover letter:

To: xyzperson@acccompany.org

From: ggoodwin@moravian.edu

Subject: Application for summer internship

Dear Ms. XYZ,

I am writing in response to the posting on Jobweb.com for a summer information systems/technology internship at ABC Company (Job #123). Please accept my attached resume as an application for this position. My experience and personality closely fit the posted job description, and I am very excited to apply.

As a management student at Moravian College, I have taken advantage of numerous research and design opportunities on campus and in class, which may be useful when working at ABC Company. During my web design class, I volunteered to organize a group that would design and create a web site using Flash technology for a local company. The project was well-received and the organization is using some of our ideas. As a student worker in the Counseling Center, I also designed an Access database to track student counseling appointments and progress. The position required a high degree of confidentiality as well as a person with the ability to work on the project until it was completed.

In addition to maintaining a 3.0 GPA and holding an on-campus job, I have also participated in various campus activities and leadership programs. By working on committees, I was able to demonstrate my leadership, teamwork, and time management skills, which can be useful in a professional setting like ABC Company.

I am eager to learn more about the internship position and would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you in an interview about my qualifications. I am available to work from May 10 through August 15, 2011 and can be reached at 608-588-1234. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gracie Goodwin

To: xyzperson@acccompany.org
From: ggoodwin@moravian.edu
Subject: Reference Request-Gracie Goodwin

I am applying for positions in the fields of business and marketing at local companies. Would you be willing to serve as a reference for me?

Thank you in advance for considering this request and I hope to hear from you soon.

[illegible]

TYPES OF COVER LETTERS

The cover letter is a very important part of the job search process. Your resume goes over your qualifications, experiences and education but it is your cover letter that will get people to even look at your resume. A good letter lets you emphasize information that you want the reader to notice in your resume. It also gives you the opportunity to tell people what your resume does not. It is an important way to market yourself.

Letter of Application

Written in reference to a position that has been advertised by an employer. The letter needs to be specific and oriented toward the needs of the employer. The content should reflect as much knowledge of the employer and position as possible. It must emphasize skills that appear most compatible with the employer and needs of the position. This is the writer's chance to tell the employer why they should take time to talk with you by telephone or meet you in person to further discuss your qualifications.

Letter of Inquiry

This letter is written to state your interest in a specific company and any openings they have that fit your experience and interests.

TIPS FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE COVER LETTER

- **Include Your Resume.** Never send a resume without a cover letter unless specifically told to do so.
- **Plan Ahead.** Make sure to plan your letter before you write it.
- **Keep It To One Page:** Be concise and to the point. Employers will not read more than one page. Make it easy to read and explain in the first sentence why you are writing.
- **Give Them What They Want:** Speak to the requirements of the job, especially when you are responding to an ad. Let the employer know how you can contribute to the company.
- **Sell Yourself:** Get the reader interested in you. Open with an idea that captures the attention of the prospective employer so the letter and resume are considered worth reading. Highlight and draw attention to the points in your resume that uniquely qualify you for the position.
- **Be Assertive:** Let them know the purpose of your letter. If you want to arrange an interview, then say so. Say at the end of the letter that you will contact them and then do it!
- **Use the Person's Title:** Make sure to refer to them by the correct title, name. You also want to spell it correctly. Call the company for the info if you have to. Try not to address the letter to "Human Resources Department."
- **Match Your Resume:** Make sure you use the same font and size.
- **Positivity:** Always be positive. Never use a negative word and make sure to leave a good impression.
- **I:** Do not overuse the word "I." Vary your sentence structure and use compound sentences. Try to be reader-oriented and use "you" or the organization's name more than you use "I" and "my."
- **Spelling and Grammar:** Use correct spelling and grammar. Review your work carefully.
- **Review Your Work:** Make sure you go over what you have written. Does it say what you want to? Does it look/sound professional? Before you send it out make sure others have read your work so you do not miss any mistakes.

BASIC COVER LETTER FORMAT

Your full address

Date

Employer's full name

Employer's title

Organization's name

Full address

City, state and full zip code

Dear _____ :

[Introduction]

1. Describe how you identified the internship or position opening.
2. Discuss any personal contacts you have within the organization who may be contacted as references.
3. Describe the position for which you are interested and state your reason for sending your résumé.

[Body]

1. This section is usually one to three paragraphs.
2. Call particular attention to the experience and potential skills you have that pertain to the internship or job opening.
3. If possible, use quantifiable information when describing your skills, i.e., I increased sales by 20%.

[Closing]

1. State when you will telephone to confirm that your résumé has been received and favorably reviewed.
2. Mention the possibility of setting up an interview.
3. Mention what action you would like taken and list what materials are enclosed.

Sincerely,

Your full signature

Your full name

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Moravian College
1200 Main Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

August 1, 20XX

Mr. James Williams
Executive Director
Partners for Education
123 Main Street
New York, NY 10028

Dear Mr. Williams:

For the past two years I have planned and participated in many community service projects through the Office Community Service and the United Student Government of Moravian College. My years spent as a Resident Advisor and a Head Resident at Moravian, as well as my summer job as a Tutor/Counselor with The Learning Connection, have exposed me to some of the most pressing issues facing our youth today. I have come to the realization that there are a large number of students out there that need help and not enough people helping them out. I want to work for an organization that is dedicated to providing opportunities to young people that would not normally be given the chance to succeed. I recently found the position description for the Mentor Coordinator position with Partners for Education on idealist.org and I feel that it is just the type of position I am looking for.

My community service experiences include the planning and coordinating of a neighborhood rake-a-thon in which I gathered members of the Student Government together to rake leaves for the neighbors of the college. I also organized the Council's participation in the Muscular Dystrophy Association's "Lock-Up" fundraiser. Both of these required me to reach out and contact people in need and coordinate the sign up process for volunteers. The most successful project that I organized was a clothing drive in which I filled my mini-van from floor to ceiling, three times, with clothes to be donated to the Good Sheppard Home.

I have had extensive experience in recruiting and training the staff members of the Residence Life Office at Moravian College. As a Head Resident I was responsible for selecting and supervising my own nine person staff for the first-year residence hall that I was in charge of. I have scheduled meetings, planned and operated many building and campus-wide programs, and facilitated the per-semester staff evaluation survey process. All of which has taught me how to be very organized and stay on task even when there are a multitude of things that need to get done.

I believe my degree in Business Management, my dedication to the humanitarianism, and my ability to see projects through to the end would be true assets to your organization. Enclosed you will find a copy of my resume highlighting my variety of work experiences. I look forward to speaking with you in further detail about my qualifications. I hope to set up a meeting at your convenience in the near future. Thank you for taking the time to review my information.

Sincerely,

Any Student

Any Student

SAMPLE LETTER OF INQUIRY

123 Main Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

March 20, 20XX

Ms. Jane Smith
Human Resources Recruiter
XYZ Company
1000 Employment Street
Any Town, NJ 12121

Dear Ms. Smith:

I learned about the global existence and the exceptional service and quality that XYZ Company has offered its customers since I studied abroad this past semester in the Netherlands, where XYZ is headquartered. The company has remained a dominant global force and provides the assurance of its industry sectors by offering added-value services. I am writing to inquire about the possibility of interning/mentoring at the office in New York City in the summer of 20XX.

The enclosed resume highlights my recent international and work experiences in the field of accounting. Last semester in the Netherlands, I developed an understanding about decision support systems (DSS) and how they work in the business environment. As part of studies, I created a DSS in Microsoft Excel and designed a graphical user interface in Microsoft Visual Basic Editor. I developed proficiency in both programs by running macros and learning programming techniques.

As an Accounts Payable Clerk this past winter at Alfred Angelo, Inc., I had the opportunity to interact with co-workers and vendors. My interpersonal and analytical skills allowed me to be a great asset to the firm. I believe that my international experience and work at Alfred Angelo, Inc. demonstrates my ability to be a successful intern at your firm.

Given the opportunity to intern at XYZ Company, I would prove myself to be reliable, diligent, and competent. I would like to speak with you about potential internship/mentorship opportunities for the summer of 20XX and will arrange my schedule to be available at your convenience. Please contact me by phone at 215-555-1212 or email at Astudent@moravian.edu to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,

Any Student
Any Student

NOTE: When sending letter of inquiry as an email, use the same text in the body of your email. Your resume should be sent as an attachment, however, play it safe and include the plain text of your resume in the bottom of your email. Make sure the recipient is aware that you are including the resume in both formats.