

# Resume/Cover Letter Guide

<b>Resume Basics</b>	2
Resume Format and Sample	3
Writing Accomplishment Statements	4
Using Action Verbs	7
Identifying Transferable Skills	8
Online Resume Review (VMock)	9
Applicant Tracking Systems	10
CV vs. Resume	12
<b>Cover Letter Basics</b>	13
Cover Letter Samples	15
<b>Reference List Basics</b>	16
<b>Resume Samples by Major</b>	

# Resume Basics

The purpose of a resume is to get you an interview by showcasing how your skills, abilities and accomplishments relate to a specific job or internship. Recruiters spend an average of **7-10 seconds** reviewing a resume, so it is important to have a clean format, clear transferable skills, and strong accomplishment statements to make your resume stand out and lead to an interview.

## Analyzing the Job Description

Before writing your resume, start by identifying the main skills, experiences, and keywords that the employer outlines in the job description. By matching your experience to the job and incorporating industry key words, you will significantly improve your chances of capturing the attention of the employer or applicant tracking system. If you do not have a detailed job description, look up the job title on [Onetonline.org](https://www.onetonline.org).

### SAMPLE RESUME

#### EXPERIENCE

**Lead Peer Advisor**, SJSU, San Jose, CA,  
September 20xx - Present

- Oversaw 7 peer advisors and **addressed** **employee relation issues** such as distribution of workload
- **Assessed and directed** 30+ students per shift to appropriate resources and staff based on need
- Organized and managed **print and electronic files** to increase operational efficiency
- **Prepared and maintained records** of 200+ student logs and survey information

#### PROJECTS

**Older Adult Intervention**, SJSU, Fall 20xx

- Observed and **assessed** the home environment of an elderly adult
- **Developed therapy intervention plan** to enhance living satisfaction by increasing access to outside activities and community events
- **Presented** life story of older adult to a class of 30+ students and received an A on the project

### SAMPLE HR JOB DESCRIPTION

#### TASKS

- **Interpret and explain** human resources policies, procedures, laws, standards, or regulations.
- **Prepare or maintain employment records** related to events such as hiring, termination, leaves, transfers, or promotions, using human resources management system software.
- **Address employee** relations issues, such as harassment allegations, work complaints, or other employee concerns.

#### SKILLS

- **Speaking** — Talking to others to convey information effectively
- **Critical Thinking** — Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
- **Writing** — Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.
- **Technology** — Using computers and computer to program, write software, set up functions, enter data, or process information.

**Bold Name, size 14 (everything else size 10-12)**

**Professional (not SJSU) email**

**Sammy Spartan**

San Jose, CA 95126 | sammy.spartan@gmail.com | (408)355-8846 | linkedin.com/in/sammyspartan

## OBJECTIVE

**Optional - If included, include the position title and company**

Seeking a Grants Associate position with the San Jose Foundation for Education Advancement to help promote educational enrichment programs for youth in San Jose.

## EDUCATION

**Include associates degree(s) but not transfer history or high school**

**B.A., English; Minor in Social Science**, May 2018

**Expected graduation date**

San Jose State University, San Jose, CA, GPA: 3.7

**Include if GPA is 3.0+**

**Relevant Coursework:** Public Finance, Social Change, Society and Education

## PROJECTS

**Order experience first if more relevant than projects**

**Preferably upper division courses**

**School Development Project**, SJSU, 8/20xx – Present

- Research and identify prospective donors to help support K-12 after-school programs for various communities in San Jose
- Monitor grants and contracts tracking databases system to target new opportunities
- Develop communications materials for donors, sponsors, media and the public

## EXPERIENCE

**Can be paid or unpaid experience. Order with most recent experience first**

**Grants Associate**, Mental Health Association of San Jose, San Jose, CA, 8/20xx – 8/20xx

- Maintained donor database using Razer's Edge Software to process all financial donations made by individuals, grants, and corporations
- Consulted with current and potential donors about any changes in funding priorities to ensure proposals and grants met guidelines

**Volunteer Activities Coordinator**, Rock Lake Elementary, Fremont, CA 1/20xx - 8/20xx

- Designed and implemented a tutoring program for 15 elementary school students
- Applied creative and innovative learning techniques including cross-cultural activities, games, journal writing, and discussion groups to increase student retention and learning

## SKILLS

**Use present/past tense accordingly for present/past experience**

**Languages:** Fluent in Vietnamese

**Computer:** Proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google Apps, Social Media

## ACTIVITIES

**Member, Poets and Writers Coalition**, San Jose State University 8/16 – Present

**General Formatting Rules: Use standard font (i.e. Arial, Times New Roman). Avoid italics/script fonts, lines, and graphics (unless in creative field). Keep to 1 page only. Use 0.5" - 1" margins.**

# Writing Accomplishment Statements

Writing strong accomplishment statements is key to demonstrating your qualifications to employers. Follow the S.T.A.R. method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to develop strong statements:

**Situation/Task:** *What did you do?* Start your statement with a strong action verb and describe situation/task you were given.

**Action:** *How did you do it?* Describe what action you took and what skills you used.

**Result:** *What was the result?* Quantify with numbers or percentages whenever possible.

**Situation/Task Example:** Marketed event to 300 club members

**Action Example:** Utilized multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram

**Result Example:** Increased event registration by 20%

**Final Statement:** Utilized multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, to market event to 300 members, increasing event registration by 20%.

See more before/after examples:

## BEFORE

Responsible for customer service.

Prepared financial reports.

Led a team of student volunteers.

Responsible for writing business plans.

Rebuilt a model radio for resale.

Responsible for the design of LCM interface.

## AFTER

Built strong customer relations by calming dissatisfied clients and following through problem resolution to completion; selected as primary agent to resolve customer disputes.

Designed, developed and distributed customized monthly budget results. Provided timely and accurate data for management analysis.

Recruited and managed a team of 10 volunteers to carry out a campus wide orientation which led to the highest satisfactory rating by participants.

Effectively demonstrated writing skills through the creation of a district business plan which reduced expenses by 10%.

Rebuilt a 1900 Philco model radio using research and technical expertise which returned a 250% profit upon sale.

Collaboratively worked with a team of 4 to design a comprehensive LCM interface. Presented the finished product in a timely manner allowing extra time to assist team with additional projects.

# Examples of Accomplishment Statements

Here are some examples of how other students have demonstrated these skills through class projects, internships, volunteer work and part-time jobs. Review these examples to help identify and describe your own experiences using these skills.

## ❑ WRITING

*translate, write, compose, edit, craft, revise, draft*

Identified prospective donors and wrote grant proposals to help support K-12 after-school enrichment programs

- Conceptualized and drafted material for organization's marketing brochure.

## ❑ COMMUNICATION

*convey, correspond, engage, publicize, connect, influence, mediate, negotiate, present, promote, teach, train, explain*

- Trained new employees on company's procedures and processes.
- Serve as liaison to campus community as president of the Creative Arts Club and present to various campus groups to increase awareness on campus.

## ❑ TEAMWORK

*collaborate, partnership, contribute, discuss*

- Collaborated with team of five for class project to research and design curriculum for after-school program to meet needs of multicultural student populations.
- In partnership with 15 classmates and faculty, successfully organized and planned "Green Careers Week," a career information event for students.

## ❑ INTERPERSONAL

*cultivate, develop, foster, interpret, understanding, relate*

- Counseled and advised diverse populations while working as a peer advocate in the Health Center at SJSU.
- Tutored and mentored high school students at Youth Works, an afterschool enrichment program for under-represented youth.

## ❑ LEADERSHIP

*initiate, spear-head, establish, launch, implement*

- Initiated and developed the concept for SJSU's "Evening Art Walk", an event where creative arts students can showcase their final senior projects.
- Spear-headed planning for the Global Studies' commencement ceremony as part of the student leadership team.

## ❑ COMPUTER SKILLS

*program, design, compute, build, develop*

- Created and maintained donor database using Razor's Edge Software including processing all financial donations (individual grants and corporate pledges).
- Designed organization website and published online reports and articles.

## ❑ ATTENTION TO DETAIL

*organize, edit, focus, attentiveness, concentrate, review*

- Developed agenda, scheduled speakers, and organized discussion groups as coordinator for a 4-day international student conference.
- Edit copy for student newspaper and ensure that grammar, layout and content are accurate.

## ❑ PROBLEM SOLVING

*clarify, strengthen, solidify, improve, increase, resolve*

- Improved access to health care services for qualifying community members by coordinating monthly tea meeting with lawyers, physicians, and social workers to efficiently process approvals.

## ❑ ORGANIZATION

*prepare, goal setting, coordinate, direct, manage, arrange, meet deadlines, deliver*

- Organized and brought together local artists from all over the San Francisco Bay Area for fundraising and promotion a events.
- Provided organizational support to staff including managing schedules, supply purchasing, filing, preparing development materials, and coordination of meetings.

## ❑ GLOBAL AWARENESS

*global consciousness, cultural competency and awareness, forging common ground, inclusion*

- Developed international counseling experience while participating in a summer internship at the University of Zambia.
- Founded an International Student Mentoring Program where domestic and international students are paired for a semester in order to foster awareness, inclusion and understanding of each other

## ❑ ANALYTICAL

*investigate, observe, discern, perceive, consider, evaluate, assess*

- Assist in the evaluation and assessment of potential candidates for all administrative support openings as human resources intern.
- Review account ledgers and balances to ensure accurate billing and financial analysis.

## ❑ FLEXIBILITY

*adapt, acclimate, adjust, modify, familiarize*

- Demonstrated adaptability while providing excellent customer service as shift leader in a busy retail environment while managing other various work priorities.

## ❑ **MULTI-CULTURAL**

*collaborated on a team with students from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds*

- Effectively collaborated with peers and faculty from various socio-economic and cultural backgrounds to develop a presentation on how cross-cultural values affect communication in business environments.

## ❑ **CRITICAL THINKING**

*critique, evaluate, review, measure, examine, problem solving*

- Evaluated customer complaints and negative reviews for class project at assigned company site, and identified three key service issues as well as potential resolutions to improve customer satisfaction.
- Conducted journal review to examine best practices in addressing poor academic performance in K-12 settings.
- Created and presented intervention plan focused on strength based learning methods to improve academic performance at a local elementary school.

## ❑ **CREATIVITY**

*conceptualize, design, create, invent, generate, draft, formulate, devise*

- Conceptualized and developed an on-going project for ESL students resulting in a publication of the student's autobiographical works for use as a learning tool for ESL teachers.
- Created visual concept for Poets and Writers Coalition's magazine launch. Designed innovative advertising materials for Annual School of Social Work Fair which contributed to a 25% increase in attendance from the previous year.

## ❑ **DESIGN AND PLANNING**

*forecast, develop, prepare, calculate, project, anticipate, propose, outline, create*

- Developed four year plan for incoming freshman to support student success as part of student leadership project.
- Prepared annual budget based on analysis of previous year's costs and revenues as the student assistant for operations manager on campus.

# Action Verbs

Use action words to get your point across clearly, efficiently, and with impact. Here are a few suggestions, listed by functional areas, to help you get started.

## **ANALYTICAL/**

### **FINANCE**

- Allocate
- Appraise
- Audit
- Balance
- Bill
- Budget
- Calculate
- Check
- Compare
- Determine
- Distinguish
- Estimate
- Factor
- Forecast
- Isolate
- Observe
- Project
- Reason
- Reconcile
- Sort
- Tabulate

## **CLERICAL/**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE**

- Archive
- Arrange
- Classify
- Collate
- Collect
- Compile
- Document
- Generate
- Implement
- Inspect
- Inventory
- Log
- Maintain
- Maintain records
- Monitor
- Operate
- Order
- Organize
- Prepare
- Process
- Purchase
- Record
- Reorganize
- Retrieve
- Schedule
- Screen
- Specify

## **TEAMWORK**

- Collaborate with
- Contribute
- Participate in
- Discuss

## **COMMUNICATION**

- Address
- Advertise
- Arbitrate
- Arrange
- Author
- Collaborate
- Communicate
- Contact
- Correspond
- Detail
- Direct
- Draft
- Edit
- Enlist
- Formulate
- Influence
- Interpret
- Invite
- Market
- Mediate
- Meet with
- Moderate
- Negotiate
- Persuade
- Present
- Promote
- Publicize
- Publish
- Reconcile
- Recruit
- Represent
- Respond
- Sell
- Solicit
- Speak
- Transcribe
- Translate
- Write

## **TEACHING/ TRAINING**

- Advise
- Assess
- Assist
- Clarify
- Coach
- Conduct
- Coordinate
- Counsel
- Critique

- Educate
- Enable
- Encourage
- Evaluate
- Explain
- Facilitate
- Teach
- Train

## **CREATIVE**

- Act
- Adapt
- Compose
- Conceive
- Conceptualize
- Create
- Customize
- Design
- Develop
- Discover
- Enhance
- Establish
- Fashion
- Founded
- Illustrate
- Initiate
- Innovate
- Institute
- Integrate
- Introduce
- Invent
- Make
- Modify
- Originate
- Perform
- Plan
- Propose
- Redesign
- Remodel
- Restructure
- Revitalize
- Shape
- Simplify
- Suggest
- Transform

## **LEADERSHIP/MGMT.**

- Administer
- Analyze
- Approve
- Assign
- Authorize
- Chair
- Consolidate
- Contract
- Control
- Coordinate
- Cultivate

- Decide
- Delegate
- Designate
- Develop
- Direct
- Disprove
- Encourage
- Evaluate
- Execute
- Handle
- Head
- Hire
- Instigate
- Judge
- Launch
- Lead
- Lobby
- Manage
- Motivate
- Orchestrate
- Organize
- Oversee
- Plan
- Prioritize
- Provide
- Recommend
- Recruit
- Regulate
- Review
- Serve as
- Serve on
- Set up
- Supervise
- Validate

## **TECHNICAL SKILLS**

- Analyze
- Assemble
- Automate
- Build
- Calculate
- Code
- Compute
- Configure
- Construct
- Convert
- Create
- Debug
- Design
- Develop
- Devise
- Diagnose
- Draft
- Engineer
- Evaluate
- Fabricate
- Inspect
- Install
- Maintain

- Make
- Manufacture
- Operate
- Overhaul
- Process
- Produce
- Program
- Remodel
- Repair
- Solve
- Survey
- Test
- Upgrade
- Validate
- Verify

## **RESEARCH**

- Accumulate
- Acquire
- Clarify
- Collect
- Compile
- Critique
- Diagnose
- Document
- Examine
- Extract
- Extrapolate
- Find
- Gather
- Identify
- Interview
- Investigate
- Organize
- Read
- Report
- Research
- Review
- Study
- Summarize
- Survey
- Synthesize
- Systematize
- Verify

## **RESULTS**

- Increase
- Meet deadlines
- Obtain
- Produce
- Recognized as
- Reduce
- Resolve
- Restore
- Solidify
- Streamline
- Strengthen
- Transform
- Win



# Transferable Skills

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As a college student, you'll develop many skills from coursework, projects, internships, work experiences, club involvement, and activities. These skills are often very applicable to your career. Learn to identify these skills, highlight them on your resume, and articulate them in an interview.

## INSTRUCTING / GUIDING

- Advising
- Coaching
- Communicating effectively
- Encouraging
- Group facilitating
- Teaching
- Training/developing

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## LEADERSHIP

- Confronting
- Coordinating
- Initiating
- Making Decisions
- Mediating
- Motivating
- Negotiating
- Planning/Effecting Change
- Policy Making
- Promoting Change
- Recruiting
- Risk taking
- Self-directing

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## ORGANIZING / MANAGEMENT

- Achieving/producing
- Committee working
- Delegating
- Evaluating
- Goal setting
- Maintaining
- Managing
- Organizing things, people
- Planning
- Prioritizing
- Program development
- Scheduling
- Supervising
- Team building
- Time management

## MACHINE MANUAL

- Adjusting
- Assembling
- Building
- Constructing
- Controlling/operating
- Filing
- Maintaining
- Operating tools/equipment
- Preparing
- Producing
- Repairing
- Showing dexterity
- Typing

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## ATHLETIC / OUTDOORS

- Agility
- Climbing/lifting
- Landscaping
- Navigating
- Physical coordination
- Traveling
- Working with animals

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## NUMERICAL / FINANCIAL

- Accounting
- Auditing
- Bookkeeping
- Budget
- Planning/implementation
- Computing Skills
- Managing Finances
- Statistical Problem Solving
- Taking Inventory

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## INFLUENCE / PERSUADING

- Advertising
- Developing rapport
- Fund raising
- Influencing
- Mediating
- Motivating
- Negotiating
- Persuading/debating
- Promoting
- Selling

## COMMUNICATIONS

- Communicating effectively
- Debating
- Editing
- Explaining
- Interpreting
- Interviewing
- Publishing
- Reporting
- Translating
- Writing

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## HELPING / HUMAN RELATIONS

- Caring, showing compassion
- Counseling
- Consulting
- Developing rapport
- Helping and serving
- Listening
- Public relations
- Referring
- Sharing credit
- Showing sensitivity
- Showing tolerance
- Team worker
- Understanding

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## INTUITIONAL / INNOVATING

- Adapting
- Balancing factors
- Conceptualizing
- Creating developing ideas
- Experimenting
- Improving
- Innovating
- Inventing
- Judging
- Making decisions
- Relating abstract ideas
- Sizing up people/situations

## ARTISTIC

- Color discrimination
- Creative imagining
- Creative writing
- Designing: visual and spatial
- Displaying
- Expressiveness
- Musical composing
- Playfulness
- Playing musical instruments
- Restoring/decorating
- Visualizing concepts
- Visualizing shapes

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## OBSERVATION / INVESTIGATIVE

- Analyzing/comparing
- Appraising
- Clarifying problems
- Compiling
- Diagnosing
- Evaluating
- Information gathering
- Inspecting/examining
- Perceptive
- Problem solving
- Questioning
- Recording
- Researching
- Reviewing/evaluating
- Surveying
- Systematizing
- Testing
- Trouble shooting

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## PERFORMANCE

- Artistic presentations
- Demonstrating
- Public speaking
- Singing, dancing, acting



VMock is an online resume tool designed to provide you with instant and personalized feedback to help you improve your resume.

## 01

### Log in with your SJSUOne ID

- Currently registered students have access to VMock.
- To log in, go to [vmock.com/sjsu](https://vmock.com/sjsu).

## 02

### Upload Your Resume

- Upload in PDF format only.
- Format resume into one column.
- Do NOT add images, tables, or graphics.
- Use standard font (e.g. Arial, Calibri, Verdana)
- Refer to our resume template on VMock. Go to Student Dashboard > Templates & Guidelines.
- You are allowed **10 resume uploads each year**.
- Click the blue **View Detailed Feedback** button to review the system feedback.

## 03

### Understanding VMock Scoring

- Scoring on VMock is strict. Don't stress about your score; focus on your color zone and aim to move closer to the Green Zone.
- VMock Resume Score is computed based on three main modules and evaluated against top SJSU resumes.
- The score indicates where your resume currently stands either in the Red, Yellow, or Green Zone.



**Red Zone:** Pay attention to the feedback and specific examples relevant to your situation.



**Yellow Zone:** You're on the right track. Follow the feedback to make improvements (score of 70 is good).



**Green Zone:** Great job! There might still be room for improvement. Make sure to review the feedback.

## 04

### VMock Feedback

VMock's System Level Feedback has 3 main modules:

**Impact** measures how effectively your content stands out to a recruiter.

**Presentation** reviews your resume format, length, grammar, and spelling. Typical score is in the single digits.

**Competencies** measures how effectively you demonstrate in-demand skills like communication, collaboration, and analytical thinking.

**Tip:** Focus on Impact and Presentation feedback.

## 05

### Update Your Resume

- Once you review VMock's detailed feedback, open a separate window to revise your resume based on the feedback and suggestions.
- Re-upload your edited resume to view your new score and incorporate further suggestions for improvement.
- Continue to make updates to your resume as needed. Aim towards reaching the Green Zone.

### Keep in mind...

- Use VMock as a starting point to get feedback on a traditionally formatted resume.
- When questioning VMock's feedback, use your best judgement. For more information on resume format and content, go to [sjsu.edu/careercenter](https://sjsu.edu/careercenter) > Launch Your Career > Resume/Cover Letter Guide.
- For additional help, attend Career Center drop-in hours or schedule an appointment with a career counselor on [sjsu.joinhandshake.com](https://sjsu.joinhandshake.com)

# Applicant Tracking Systems

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## What is an applicant tracking system (ATS)?

ATS is a software application used to process applications and streamline the hiring process. The ATS does the initial selection of candidates by efficiently scanning resumes with the goal of finding a match between the candidate's experience, qualifications, and skills, and the description of the job posting. You may be able to tell if a company uses an ATS description by seeing if their application link has a subdomain of an ATS company (i.e. companyname.taleo.com).

## Why should I care?

**95%** of large companies / **50%** of mid-sized companies use applicant tracking systems.

**75%** of resumes never make it to the hiring manager because they are screened out by ATS.

## So how do I write a resume that passes the ATS?

- 1. Upload your resume in the requested format.** If there is no specified format, PDF is recommended.
- 2. Use keywords in context.** Mirror phrases, action verbs, keywords, and skills from the job description. If the job description states "hotel management" experience and you have that experience, use the same exact keywords in the resume.
- 3. Do your research.** Look at the company's website to see what industry terminology they use. Look up current employees of the company on LinkedIn.com and see how they describe their experience.
- 4. Use standard formatting.** This includes fonts (ex. Times New Roman, Arial), section titles (ex. Education, Experience), and work history (ex. job position, employer, dates). Avoid using headers, footers, text boxes, tables, or graphics.
- 5. Go over the 1-page rule if needed.** If you have relevant experience that goes over one page, feel free to write a longer resume as long as it is directly related to the job description.

**Tip:** Oftentimes, by networking with peers, alumni, and industry professionals, you can have your resume sent through a separate application process that bypasses the ATS altogether.

## Resources

- [Jobscan.co](https://www.jobscan.co) – Copy paste the job description and resume text to compare how they match in terms of hard skills, soft skills, and keywords.
- [WordClouds.com](https://www.wordclouds.com) – Copy paste the job description in this word cloud generator to identify common keywords in a job description.

# CV vs. Resume

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A curriculum vitae, or CV, is a detailed record of your education and employment history. If you are applying to academic positions, research grants, graduate school, and positions abroad, you may be asked to include a CV. Unlike a resume, a CV is more lengthy, often 5-10 pages, and is not customized to a specific position. See an example below:

## **SAMMY S. SPARTAN**

San Jose, CA 95008  
(888) 888-8888  
sammyspartan@gmail.com

### **EDUCATION:**

San Jose State University, San Jose CA  
Bachelor of Arts Political Science, 3.85 GPA Spring 2017  
Global Politics Concentration, Minor in Economics  
Study Abroad, Barcelona, Spain Summer 2016

### **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:**

#### **Senior Project: Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals**, SJSU, Spring 2017

- Conducted a comparative case study analysis of the public policy implementation in Malawi, Kenya, and Ghana as a response to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals
- Compiled and synthesized research into a 25-page research paper and presented research in a campus-wide poster presentation to over 40 faculty members and political science students

#### **Nuclear Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era**, SJSU, Fall 2015

- Researched the history and progress of nuclear disarmament and compiled over 30 primary sources into a 15-page research paper
- Created a PowerPoint presentation and presented research findings to a class of 30 students

#### **Research Assistant, Professor X**, SJSU, Fall 2016 - Spring 2017

- Developed a 20-page Literature Review Guide for Professor X's Senior Project students
- Assisted in Literature Review research for Dr. X's publications on World Food Politics

#### **Research Assistant, Professor Y**, SJSU, Fall 2015 - Spring 2016

- Conducted database research on comparative factors that influence democracy amongst nations

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

#### **Teaching Assistant (Intro to International Relations)**, SJSU, Spring 2015

- Assisted professor in leading discussions and in classroom management, creating an inclusive and productive learning environment for students
- Graded over 50 midterms and final exams and provided constructive feedback to students to help them learn and improve in the course
- Held office hours for 2 hours weekly to answer student questions and provide guidance on assignments and developing research topics

### **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE:**

#### **Intern California Senate Caucus**, Communications Department, Summer 2014

- Wrote press briefings and articles for the Caucus website on recent events and policy achievements
- Conducted research for California State Senators to inform their policy decisions
- Monitored social media accounts and made weekly posts to increase user base
- Collaborated with campaign team to do precinct walks and make phone calls to potential voters

# CV Example (cont'd)

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## **Model United Nations**, September 2014 - May 2015

- Served as the Kuwaiti delegate for the OPEC Oil Crisis Historical Committee at the 2015 UC Berkeley Model United Nations Conference
- Sponsored the passing resolution on cholera containment as the Venezuelan representative in the World Health Organization at the 2014 UC Berkeley Model United Nations Conference

## **Resident Advisor**, San Jose State University Housing 2014-2015

- Developed a community of over 70 residents, serving as a role model and student leader in charge of student education, safety and well-being, resource referral, and social justice engagement
- Planned and facilitated weekly programming activities to increase student engagement and enhance the student experience

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Waitress**, Cheesecake Factory, San Jose, CA, 2016-2017

**Barista**, Starbucks Coffee, San Jose CA, 2013-2014

## **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE**

**House Building in Tijuana**, Mexico, Summer 2015

- Travelled with a group of 40 church members to assemble over 5 houses for low-income families

**Food Pantry**, SJSU, San Jose, CA, 2014-2016

- Volunteered bi-monthly to organize food donations and serve meals to the homeless

## **AFFILIATIONS**

Member, American Political Science Association 2016-2017

Member, Pi Sigma Alpha, San Jose State University 2015-2017

Member, AIESEC, San Jose State University 2016-2017

## **CONFERENCES**

Social Justice Conference, San Jose State University Spring 2016

Women in Leadership Conference, San Jose, CA Fall 2016

## **TRAININGS**

Introduction to Stata, San Jose State University Fall 2015

Social Inclusion and Diversity Training, San Jose State University Fall 2014

Sexual Assault Advocate Training, San Jose State University Fall 2014

## **HONORS and AWARDS:**

Outstanding Senior Award for San Jose State Political Science Department Spring 2017

RA of the year Spring 2015

XYZ Scholarship 2014-2015

## **SKILLS**

Computer: Stata, SPSS, Microsoft Office, Google Drive, Wordpress, Adobe Illustrator

Language: Fluent in English, Intermediate speaking and writing ability in Spanish

## **RESEARCH INTERESTS**

International Security/ Terrorism

International Development

Regions: Middle East/North Africa and Eastern Europe

# Cover Letter Basics

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A cover letter provides the opportunity to introduce:

- Who you are
- Why you want the job/internship
- Why you are uniquely qualified for a position or company

When done well, a cover letter can be a great way to demonstrate your writing skills and personality in a way that separates you from other candidates.

## Format

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Cover letters are typically 1/2 to 3/4 of a page long. They include 3-4 paragraphs:

1. **Statement of Intent (1st Paragraph):** Draw the reader's attention by starting with a hook. Be creative: what drew you into the company or position? Why are you pursuing a career in this field? For example:

"When I was growing up, all I wanted to be was one of those people who pretend to be statues on the street. Thankfully, my career goals have become a little more aspirational over the years, but I love to draw a crowd and entertain the masses—passions that make me the perfect community manager."

"My last boss once told me that my phone manner could probably diffuse an international hostage situation. I've always had a knack for communicating with people—the easygoing and the difficult alike—and I'd love to bring that skill to the office manager position at Shutterstock."

"If we were playing 'Two Truths and a Lie,' I'd say the following: I've exceeded my sales quotas by at least 20% every quarter this year, I once won an international pie-eating contest, and I have an amazing job at Yext. The last, of course, is the lie. For now."

See more examples here: "[31 Attention Grabbing Cover Letter Examples](#)" by The Muse. After the hook, explain why the organization/position appeals to you and how your skills/experience match the qualifications.

2. **Summary of Qualifications (2nd/3rd Paragraphs):** Think of one or two key experiences that showcase the skills the employer is looking for. Unlike the quick bullet points in a resume, tell a story. This is your chance to showcase why you are most qualified for the position.
3. **Request for Action (Final Paragraph):** Close by summarizing your skills and experience in relation to the job description. Show your interest by making a specific request for an interview. For example, "I'm excited about the human resources internship at Company ABC and would love to opportunity to meet in person and further discuss the value I can offer as an intern." Thank the reader for taking the time to consider your application.

# Cover Letter Sample (Formal)

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Sammy Spartan  
San Jose, CA 95192  
sammy.spartan@gmail.com  
(123)456-7890

Date

Company Name  
123 Spartan Way  
San Jose, CA 95192

Dear Hiring Manager,

When I was 7 years old, I believed I was a genius because I could read Greek when everyone else was just reading English. While I still have some genius-like moments, I quickly learned that I had dyslexia, and battled this challenge as a student to push through school and graduate from SJSU with a degree in psychology. Because of this, working with youth and helping them manage and overcome their learning disabilities has been a passion of mine. The moment I read your mission of putting youth first, I knew that this would be a place where I could contribute as a behavioral therapist.

Last summer, I was fortunate to have an internship with XXX organization. Through this experience, I was able to observe one-on-one and group therapy sessions with children ages 7 to 12. I practiced my active listening skills while doing intake at the front desk and honed my communication and empathy skills as a therapist. Furthermore, as a part of my senior seminar, I wrote a research paper on the effects of learning disabilities on school age children and their self-confidence. I was given the opportunity to present my paper at the Santa Clara County Office of Education professional development day. This opportunity allowed me to improve my writing, research and analytical skills, as well as my ability to present publicly.

Given my dedication to helping youth with disabilities and strong interpersonal skills, I would love the opportunity to be a part of your team as a behavior therapist. I truly would love to make a difference in these kids' lives and welcome the opportunity to talk with you in person regarding my skills and qualifications. Thank you for considering my application, and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Best,  
Sammy Spartan

# Cover Letter Sample (Creative)

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Dear Hiring Manager,

With one glance at a minimalist, sleek building within a residential district in San Jose, I knew that this company stood out. Company ABC brings an edgy product to animation through teamwork and risk-taking, even if it means mapping post it notes of Nyan Cat on the windows to fuel the creativity. Currently, I am working towards a BA in Graphic Design at San José State University. Studios and open-minded, every day I uncover varied perspectives in typography, layout, and organization. With my experience and passion for design, I hope to add further value as a design intern to your company.

## I'M A SPARTAN

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portfolium.com/imaspartan  
imaspartan@gmail.com  
(123)456-7890  
San Jose, CA 95192

Having worked as an executive officer for the Design Studies Club at San Jose State University, I developed informational brochures, flyers, and minimalist t-shirt designs in a fast-paced environment. Each week, I briskly walked into a pungent coffee shop and sat next to a humble and reserved fellow designer who sketched minuscule drawings on her pristine pad. During our meetings, I gave her constructive feedback on her drafts, and she passed me suggestions on my designs. While completing the Design Studies Club t-shirt design, I learned that communication between the designer and the client is vital to enhancing an understanding of concept and expectations.

In addition to working as an executive officer, I assisted students in the graphic design department at San Jose State University to develop their projects. Imagine five hands shooting up in the air at once desperately seeking support. In these situations, one must gather their thoughts and swiftly assist the student. In order to best serve thirty students, I researched design solutions and stayed informed with the Adobe software.

With the ability to quickly receive and adapt to feedback as well as design skills in Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, I believe that I can contribute to your company. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to speaking with you further!

Sincerely,  
Im a Spartan



# Reference List Basics

Employers may request references in the application or interview process to verify your employment history and learn about your strengths and weaknesses from previous supervisors or co-workers. Do not provide a reference list until the employer requests one. If you are asked to provide a reference list, use these following tips:



## CONTACT INFO

Make sure your contact information is at the top and includes your name, city, contact number, and email address.



## ALWAYS ASK

Always ask permission from your references before you use their names. Prepare them by obtaining their current contact information and sharing your resume and job description with them.



## WHO CAN BE MY REFERENCE?

References should be individuals who know your work and can vouch for you in a professional matter.

**Examples:** Current and former supervisors, mentors, advisers.



## WHO SHOULD NOT BE MY REFERENCE?

References should not be your family, friends, or peers.

Do not choose people who are not familiar with your professional background or accomplishments.

### Ima Spartan

San Jose, CA 95192

408-555-1234

imaspartan@sjsu.edu

## REFERENCES

### Alice Smith

Associate Director of Health Services

San Jose State University

One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192

408-123-4567

alicesmith@sjsu.edu

Relationship: Supervisor

### Bob Matthews, Ph.D.

Director

Santa Clara County Health Department

1234 Lenzen Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126

408-987-6543

bmatthews@phd.sccgov.org

Relationship: Former supervisor

### Curtis Phillips, M.A.

Program Manager

UNICEF

987 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94104

415-678-9876

phillips@unicef.org

Relationship: Mentor

# Resume Samples by Major

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Resumes may vary by industry and job. See specific resumes by majors for examples on unique sections, formatting, or skills that are unique to the major. If your major is not listed below, see a related resume sample (for example, communications, public relations, and journalism have similar resume formats).

## **General**

- First Year/Undeclared
- Second/Third Year

## **Arts, Communication, and Entertainment**

- Art
- Communication
- Graphic Design
- Radio, Television, and Film
- Theatre

## **Business, Financial Services, and Logistics**

- Accounting
- Human Resources

## **Education and Public & Human Services**

- Behavioral Science
- Child and Adolescent Development
- Educational Counseling
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Teaching

## **Health and Nutrition**

- Health Science
- Nursing
- Public Health

## **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math**

- Computer Engineering
- Biology