

Sample Letter Format

Contact Information *(Include your contact information unless you are writing on letterhead that already includes it.)*

Your Name

Your Address

Your City, State Zip Code

Your Phone Number

Your Email Address

Date

Contact Information *(The person or company you are writing to)*

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, State Zip Code

Greeting (Salutation Examples)

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

Use a **formal salutation**, not a first name, unless you know the person well. If you do not know the person's gender, you can write out their full name. For instance, "Dear Pat Crody" instead of "Dear Mr. Crody" or "Dear Ms. Crody." If you do not know the recipient's name, it's still common and acceptable to use the old-fashioned "To Whom It May Concern."

Body of Letter

- **The first paragraph of your letter** should provide an introduction as to why you are writing so that your reason for contacting the person is obvious from the beginning.
- Then, in the **following paragraphs**, provide specific details about your request or the information you are providing.
- The **last paragraph** of your letter should reiterate the reason you are writing and thank the reader for reviewing your request. If appropriate, it should also politely ask for a written response or for the opportunity to arrange a meeting to further discuss your request.

Closing

Best regards, (Closing Examples)

Signature

Handwritten Signature *(For a hard copy letter, use black or blue ink to sign the letter.)*

Typed Signature

Professional Letter Example

Nicole Thomas
35 Chestnut Street
Dell Village, Wisconsin 54101
555-555-5555
nicole@thomas.com

August 3, 2020

Jason Andrews
Manager
LMK Company
53 Oak Avenue, Ste 5
Dell Village, Wisconsin 54101

Dear Jason,

I'm writing to resign from my position as customer service representative, effective August 14, 2020.

I've recently decided to go back to school, and my program starts in early September. I'm tendering my resignation now so that I can be as helpful as possible to you during the transition.

I've truly enjoyed my time working with you and everyone else on our team at LMK. It's rare to find a customer service role that offers as much opportunity to grow and learn, as well as such a positive, inspiring team of people to grow and learn with.

I'm particularly grateful for your guidance while I was considering furthering my education. Your support has meant so much to me.

Please let me know if there's anything I can do to help you find and train my replacement.

Thanks, and best wishes,

Nicole Thomas (signature hard copy letter)

Nicole Thomas



JOB APPLICATION WITH

- [Write Your Resume](#)
- [Create Your Cover Letter](#)
- [Know When to Use a Curriculum Vitae \(CV\)](#)
- [List of References and Recommendation Letters](#)

Write Your Resume

A resume and cover letter are your marketing tools to make an impact on a potential employer and secure an interview. There are literally hundreds of books on the market with good advice about how to write effective resumes and cover letters, each with a different opinion on style and content. We believe that writing a quality resume and cover letter for internship and full-time job opportunities begins with a targeted, one-page summary of your skills and experiences that convinces the employer you would be successful in that position. The goal is to make your materials so engaging that the reader cannot wait to meet you. Not sure what experience you have? Check out our list of activities to get you started!

Resume Format Guidelines

The most acceptable and readily used format for college students is the chronological resume, in which your most recent experience is first. How you choose to construct your resume, in terms of style, is up to you. For example, placing dates on the left or right or whether your contact information should be centered or on the left-hand column is your choice. Remember consistency is the name of the game. Always maintain the same style throughout your resume.

- **Contact Information:** Put your contact information at the top of your resume. It should include your name, address (optional), phone number, and email address. If you plan to relocate soon it is acceptable to list a permanent address.
- **Objective:** For most college students seeking internships or entering the professional job market, stating an objective on your resume is not necessary. Instead, bring out your interests in a cover letter that is customized for the specific job.
- **Education:** List your degrees in reverse chronological order, with the most recent degree first as well as any study abroad experiences. Include relevant coursework to highlight your specific skills and knowledge. If your GPA is 3.0 or above, you may list it in this section.
- **Experience:** List your most recent experience first and do not overlook internships, volunteer positions, and part-time employment. Use action verbs to highlight accomplishments and skills.
- **Leadership and Activities:** List leadership positions in university or community organizations. Highlight activities including community service, athletics (which could be a separate heading), or volunteer experience.
- **Academic Projects:** If you have specific academic projects that qualify you for the position, include them in their own section with details on what you accomplished.
- **Additional Information:** This section may stand alone under the "Additional Information" heading and highlight relevant information that may include computer skills, language skills, professional associations, university and community activities (including any offices held), and interests.

My Resume Checklist

- No spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors
- Makes clear, concise, and positive impression in 30 seconds or less
- One page (more if writing a curriculum vitae/CV for an academic or research position)
- Organized, easy to read, and has a balance between content and white space
- Uses standard fonts including Times New Roman, Arial, Century, Helvetica, or Verdana in sizes 10, 11, or 12; do not use a font size smaller than size 10.
- Highlights skills and accomplishments that match keywords found in the job description
- Quantifies accomplishments, if possible (e.g., how much \$ raised, # of people served and % of time saved)
- Utilizes accomplishment statements
 - Action verb stating what you did
 - How you did it
 - Result (quantify when possible)
- Cites relevant publications and presentations using the bibliographic style of your field
- Do not use graphics, tables, or columns in your resume; Applicant Tracking Systems cannot read them
- **NO GENERIC RESUMES!**

Tressa Traveler

3601 Trousdale Parkway | Los Angeles, CA | 90089 | (213) 555-5555
tressat@usc.edu | Tressa Blogspot | LinkedIn.com/TressaTraveler

EDUCATION

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA May 2023
Bachelor of Arts, Communication GPA 3.67

Mira Costa High School Manhattan Beach, CA
California Scholarship Federation, Scholar Athlete June 2019

SKILLS

Languages: Conversational Spanish
Technical: Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite
Social Media: Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, Vine

WORK EXPERIENCE

Target, Manhattan Beach, CA July 2019 – Present
Presentation Team Member

- Use company guidelines to set new merchandise displays
- Create signs and labels to drive sales by 10%
- Ensure shelves are stocked with current products

Manhattan Beach Recreation Department, Manhattan Beach, CA Summers 2016, 2017
Camp Counselor

- Taught volleyball fundamentals and sportsmanship to 20 middle school-aged girls
- Met with parents to set expectations and review progress
- Attended weekly training sessions with 5 camp administrators

PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Content Analysis of Popular Films: Examining Character Portrayals, USC Fall 2019
Team Member

- Coded films for 8 hours per week in laboratory
- Assessed conflicts in coding sheets with 3 team members

ATHLETICS

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA August 2019 – Present
Member, Division 1 Women's Beach Volleyball Team

- NCAA Beach Volleyball Champions, 2019
- 12-time starter on National Championship Team
- Competed in 24 events over a three-month period

← Notice they included their blog address. Adding a LinkedIn address is suggested as well

← Mention the month and year for graduation date, even if it is in the future

← It is fine to mention high school if you are a first-year student. Otherwise, omit

← Mention tangible skills that are directly related to the position you are applying to based on the job description

← Notice that each bullet starts with an action verb and focuses on results

← Whenever possible, include ways to quantify your work to help provide context to the reader

← Class projects are a great way to demonstrate job-related skills you are building as a student

← Share team accomplishments and your level of engagement with the team's activities

Tiffany Traveler

813 Johnson Dr. • Los Angeles, CA 90089 • (213) 123-4567 • ttravel@gmail.com

EDUCATION

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA May 2025
Marshall School of Business
Bachelor of Science, Business Administration
Emphasis in Marketing and Public Relations
Major GPA 3.61, Cumulative GPA 3.41

Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, Study Abroad Spring 2024

California State University, Long Beach, Long Beach, CA May 2023
Business Administration coursework

WORK EXPERIENCE

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA August 2023 - Present
Athletic Department, Customer Service Assistant

- Respond to 100-150 customer inquiries daily
- Provide administrative support to 20 professionals

Discovery Channel, Bethesda, MD Summer 2023
Alternative Programming Development, Intern

- Supported three producers during pitching, production and board meetings
- Researched creative ideas and materials for programming

Town and Gown Mortgage, Los Angeles, CA Summer 2022
Marketing Department, Administration Assistant

- Marketed services to existing customers, increasing qualified loan applicants by 10%
- Verified employment and financial data for loan applicants

LEADERSHIP

Sigma Kappa Sorority, USC 2023 - Present
Philanthropy Chair (January 2024 - Present)

- Planned, organized, and developed event raising \$25,000 for Alzheimer's Research

USC Entrepreneur Club 2023 - Present
Vice President of Membership (January 2024 - Present)

- Increased new member enrollment by over 25% through self-designed marketing plan

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

American Marketing Association, Student Member 2023 - Present
USC Dance Force 2023 - Present

Computer: Microsoft Office, QuickBooks, LexisNexis; PC and Mac platforms
Languages: Fluent Spanish, Conversational Italian
Interests: Cooking, USC Athletics, Marketing, Golf

Create Your Cover Letter

Your resume is your marketing brochure. Your cover letter is your introduction or 'executive summary' to your resume. The main point of a cover letter is to tie your experience directly to the job description. Look at the description and be sure the words relate directly to those in your cover letter and resume. If the employer is looking for teamwork, highlight a team experience in your resume, and be sure to include a team-related accomplishment in your cover letter. Your cover letter should be:

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- **Concise:** Your cover letter should be three to four paragraphs. Any longer might lose the interest of the reader. We suggest the following format:
 - **Opening paragraph:** Four or five sentences maximum. Mention the position you are applying to/interested in, briefly introduce yourself, and indicate where you learned of the opportunity.
 - **Body of letter:** Usually one or two paragraphs. Share detailed examples of your qualifications for the position's specific requirements. Many students choose to use one paragraph to discuss previous work experiences and another to discuss academic or leadership experiences, etc. Choose whichever combination communicates your most relevant qualifications.
 - **Closing:** Three to four sentences maximum. Summarize your qualifications, restate your enthusiasm for the position, and include your preferred contact information for the employer to follow-up with you.
- **Clear:** Articulate your qualifications in words that mirror what the employer-provided in the job description. Do not try to impress with a long list of accomplishments.
- **Convincing:** An employer will make a decision on your candidacy based on the combined letter and resume package. You have to articulate the connection to the job description and sell your skills. Why should the employer hire you?

My Cover Letter Checklist

- The words and action verbs in your cover letter should be reflective of the job description
- Always be professional
- Use proper grammar
- Check for spelling and punctuation errors
- Know to whom the resume/cover letter package is going to
- Call the organization to see if they can provide you the correct name and title of the person to whom you should be addressing the letter
- Do not use "To Whom It May Concern"; address the letter to a specific Recruiter or Hiring Manager whenever possible, or write Dear Sir/Madam
- Use paragraph form, not bullet points
- Do not copy and paste content directly from your resume to your cover letter
- Do not be forward in requesting an interview
- Keep to one page (no more than three to four paragraphs)
- When emailing a recruiter or hiring manager directly, use the body of the email to write two to three sentences that introduce yourself and mention to which position you are applying. Include your cover letter and resume as PDF attachments. Do not cut and paste your cover letter into the body of the email.

Sample Cover Letter

It is OK to use either of these types of headers for your cover letter.

(traditional block:)

Tiffany Traveler
813 Johnson Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90089

March 3, 2024

Emily Annenberg
Marketing Coordinator
Focus Marketing, LLC
1391 Tweet St.
Los Angeles, CA 90089

(match your resume:)

Tiffany Traveler
813 Johnson Drive * Los Angeles, CA 90089 * (213) 123-4567 * ttravel@usc.edu

March 3, 2024

Emily Annenberg
Marketing Coordinator
Focus Marketing, LLC
1391 Tweet St.
Los Angeles, CA 90089

Dear Ms. Annenberg, (or use full name if pronoun is uncertain)

Dear Ms. Annenberg, (or use full name if pronoun is uncertain)

It was great meeting you during the University of Southern California (USC) Internship Week marketing panel on February 13. I am very interested in the Focus Marketing, LLC internship position advertised through the USC connectSC portal. I am a junior at USC majoring in Psychology and am very excited about this opportunity to combine my skills in social media and marketing to customize services for Focus Marketing, LLC's clients.

One desired strength mentioned for the Focus Marketing, LLC internship is motivation. As a leader and Marketing Chair of OUTreach, a USC community service organization, I coordinate and write articles for our weekly newsletter and maintain three social media pages, including Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. I increased our social media audience by 50% within 12 months by developing strategic partnerships across campus and customizing updates for each social media account daily. Part of my success is attributed to my passion for marketing our organization to the USC community. I am confident my high motivation level, strong social media and marketing skills make me an excellent match for this internship position.

I understand that creativity is a very important asset to successful product launches. Recently, I worked closely with four team members to propose a new product line of beverages during a marketing class. I designed a 3D product rendering, a print brochure and a social media ad using Photoshop. As part of the final project, our team presented the product line to a panel of marketing professionals. The panel ranked the project first place among eight groups nationally. Remarks from the panel included mention of my innovative designs. Using my creative skills to benefit the Focus Marketing, LLC team would be a great experience in my future career as a Public Relations professional.

I am highly motivated to contribute my creative, social media and marketing skills through the internship. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to discussing my qualifications with you in the near future. I can be reached at (213) 123-4567 or by email at ttravel@usc.edu.

Best regards,

Tiffany Traveler

Know When to Use a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

If you are considering positions in academia (teaching and research), you are generally asked to provide a curriculum vitae (CV) in lieu of a resume.

The CV provides a complete summary of your academic achievements. The length of your CV will grow along with your academic successes. It is important to highlight accomplishments that are relevant to the opportunity of your interest.

Purpose: To highlight your scholarly and professional experiences when applying for academic (faculty), research positions, academic postdoctoral research opportunities, grants, and fellowships. Keep in mind the purpose is also to interest a committee in interviewing you. Therefore, be selective on your accomplishments that will show you are a strong candidate for the job, department, and institution.

CVs vary from discipline to discipline. It is recommended to reference CV's of others in your field (fellow grad students, postdocs in your lab, new faculty in your department) and have your advisor review it as well.

Length: 2-3 pages (additional pages can be added as you further your career)

Content: is focused on expertise – what makes you an expert in your field? Tailor experiences to highlight fit with a specific role, department, or institution. Standard CV sections include: Education, Teaching Experience, Research Experience, Honors and Awards, Professional/Volunteer Experience, Publications, Presentations, Scholarly/Professional Affiliations, Research Interests, Extracurricular Activities, Licensing/Registration/Certifications, Grants/Fellowships, University Service, Technical Skills, and References.

Always keep in mind that every CV should include information about your education and relevant professional experience. The organization or layout of your CV should reflect your experience in reverse chronological order (list most recent experience first, and then go back in time) and put the most important information on the first few pages. As a general rule, whatever is most important merits the most space. Make sure your CV is clear and concise. Lastly, if you are applying for positions in different types of institutions or departments, you will probably need more than one version of your CV.

Write Your CV

Getting Started:

- It is a good practice before drafting your CV to review your qualifications and the qualifications listed on the job/announcement of your interest. Using the categories suggested (i.e. Research Experience, Publications, and Presentations, etc.), list everything that will connect your experience to the qualifications of the job. This is a great time to inventory your expertise, skills, and accomplishments that are relevant and connect them to the needs of the job at hand. The organization of your CV will depend on each application/job and the experience you want to highlight right away.
- Once you have found the job you want to apply to, it is important to understand the conventions of the field (i.e. industry/institution terminology).

CV Layout

The simpler the layout or format, the easier it is to read. The use of standard fonts such as Times New Roman, Arial, Century, Helvetica, or Verdana in sizes 10, 11, or 12 is recommended. Avoid using a font size smaller than size 10.

- **Tips:**
 - Include your name on every page and add a page number on your CV.
 - Highlight areas you want to emphasize by indenting, capitalizing, spacing and bolding.

Categories:

- **Contact Information:** It includes your name, address (listing only City and State is acceptable), phone number, and email. Contact information always comes first and is placed at the top of your CV.
- **Education:** As a Ph.D. student you will want to list the education category first in reverse chronological order (listing your most current program back to your undergraduate experience). Items to include: Name of institution and date degrees were awarded. If you are currently in a degree program, list the date you expect to receive the degree. If you will not be completing your degree for a while, highlight completion dates of important objectives such as passing qualifying exams and coursework completed. If you are a Postdoctoral student, you may want to reflect relevant experience first before listing education.
 - Additional details to consider adding in this category: academic focus and title of dissertation or thesis
- **Experience:** This category is the space where you will want to highlight experience relevant to the job or announcement. Keep in mind the audience of employers you want to attract to your skills and expertise.
 - For faculty positions, typical categories: "Teaching Experience" or "Research Experience". Provide an overview of the accomplishments you attained in each category.
 - For industry positions, typical categories: "Professional Experience" or "Relevant Experience". Provide an overview of the accomplishments you attained. Use action verbs to highlight skills and accomplishments that match keywords found in the job description.
 - Accomplishment bullet format: Action verb(stating what you did) + How you did it + Result (Quantify if possible \$, #, %)

- **Honors and Awards:** Depending on how significant or prestigious your award and/or the number of awards you have, you may include them under the “Education” section. Otherwise, you can create a separate section and include a brief explanation.
- **Publications and Presentations:** List information in this section in reverse chronological order. Publications may include books, book chapters, articles, and book reviews. Include all of the information about each publication, including the title, journal title, date of publication, and (if applicable) page numbers. It is recommended to have separate sections if you have a long list. Consider subdividing by topic as needed: peer review papers, reviews, poster presentations, conferences, and invited talks.
- **Scholarly/Professional Affiliations:** List memberships in societies and professional organizations in your discipline. You might include your active involvement in the organization even if you do not hold a leadership role. For example, highlight your contribution to specific projects and events. In addition, you may want to reference your participation in moderating a panel.
- **Grants/Fellowships:** This category is where you list significant funding you have received. Include the funding agency and the project(s) that were funded. The work performed in support of the grant can be noted in detail under “Experience”. List internships and fellowships, including organization, title, and dates.
- **Research Interests:** This category answers the “What’s Next” question
- **Extracurricular Activities:** List your involvement in student organizations, alumni groups, and charity organizations to name a few.
- **Licensing/Registration/Certifications:** List type of license, certification, or accreditation, and date received.
- **University Service:** Include any service you have done for your department, such as serving as a student advisor, acting as chair of a department, or providing any other administrative assistance/projects.
- **Technical Skills:** This category highlights your knowledge in software programs, foreign languages, social media, etc.
- **References:** Depending on your field, you might include a list of your references at the end of your CV. Always include your contact information on your reference sheet and it is recommended to title it, for example, “References for Tommy Trojan”. Make sure you ask permission of the person you intend to use as a reference. Always provide complete information about the person on your reference and note their preferred use of post-nominal letters (Ph.D., MD, CPA, etc.) or a title (Mr., Mrs., Ms.). In your list make sure you include the following: full name, title, department, institution, address, phone, and email.

List of References and Recommendation Letters

A list of references should include three to five people who can speak to your education, work, and/or professional background related to the position you are applying to. You should tailor the list according to whom you believe knows your unique qualifications for the position the best. Please ask potential references if they are comfortable serving as a reference and give them information (including the job description) about the positions you are applying to before you submit their name and information on your reference list. Your list of references should have the same heading as your resume and cover letter.

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Chris McCarthy
3601 Trousdale Parkway Los Angeles, CA 90089
chrismc@usc.edu (213) 555-5555

REFERENCES

Robert Bovard, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
University of Southern California
Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences
University Park Campus
Los Angeles, California 90089
(123) 456-7890
xxxxx@xxxxxxx

Sandra Levy
Senior Project Coordinator
Levy Construction Services
Los Angeles, California 90089
(123) 805-9115
xxxxx@xxxxxxx

Donna Doheny
President
The Doheny Group
1880 Trousdale Parkway
Los Angeles, California 90089
(123) 405-6010
xxxxx@xxxxxxx

Thomas Trojan, CFA
Director of Investment Advisory
Trojan Investments
1923 Childs Way
Los Angeles, CA 90089
(123) 210-5705
xxxxx@xxxxxxx

A recommendation letter should describe your personal traits, education, work, and/or professional background in relation to the scholarship, graduate school, or position you are applying to. Recommendation letters are generally provided for scholarship and graduate school applications, but some employers will ask on occasion. Usually, the letters are written by people on your reference list. You will want to send the person writing the letter any important information that should be included in the letter. This helps ensure the

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recommendation letter covers what the reader wants to know about you to help make a decision on your candidacy.

A list of references and recommendation letters should NOT be included with application materials unless requested by the employer.