Cover Letter and Résumé Checklist

Use a job description (or relevant aspirational job description) to direct your unique résumé.

Formatting

- [ ] Borders are even and spaced ½ to 1-inch on all sides
- [ ] Format for Applicant Tracking System (ATS): Arial, Tahoma or Calibri font and no lines; minimize caps/bold/italics
- [ ] Main sections should be 10-12 pt. font size; dates are in same month/day format
- [ ] Only include information for no more than 12 – 15 years so you do not risk looking old and outdated
- [ ] Confirm hashes between all dates are formatted uniformly
- [ ] **Must be completely error free**: check for grammar/typos
- [ ] Do not use pronouns in a résumé; in cover letters you can

Header/Contact Information

- [ ] Name includes first and last name; All CAPS; 14-16 font and bold such as **JANE DOE** and not Jane Doe
- [ ] Format is clear, spaced, and neat; address is current; email address is professional looking; use Gmail accounts for email addresses ONLY
- [ ] Phone number is a direct line, formatted like (203) 123-1234; ensure answering message is professional sounding and there is no music playing at any time
- [ ] LinkedIn profile address is added and customized as some version of your full name; no numbers or miscellaneous letters should be included

Profile/Summary Statement

- [ ] Goes directly above the Education (or Experience) section
- [ ] Brief; written in bullets or short concise phrases; no sentences and no periods after any bullet point
- [ ] Must give a short/concise snapshot of your experience and skills/qualifications that match the job description; each job is different so each résumé you send out should be customized for the position in which you are applying
- [ ] Do not list subjective opinions such as "Detailed-Oriented," or "Hard Working," etc.: Must have examples to list for the skills or attributes you say you have
- [ ] Included most relevant technical skills in this section and not at the bottom of the page
- [ ] Include the impact or what you have improved; what distinguishes you from everyone else?
- [ ] Add Languages spoken/written; software knowledge, qualifying if relevant

Education

- [ ] If you are a student and have no relevant experience, place **Education** directly under your **Profile/Summary**
- [ ] Spell out degrees and include major/minor, grad date (use "anticipated" if not yet graduated)
    Example:

Your School, Town, CT
Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology; Minor in Writing
Anticipated date of graduation: May 20XX
GPA 3.7/4.0

☐ Do not include information related to ***high school or community college***

☐ If GPA is above 3.0 include it; Do NOT include GPA if it is less than 3.0; Do not forget to include the scale in which it is calculated: GPA 3.7/4.0

☐ List upper level coursework and international study if relevant; Do not list introductory courses or Level I & II courses that everyone takes because it is not optimal use of space

☐ List honors received upon graduation, if any: "Magna Cum Laude"

☐ Include certifications or 3rd party training achievements

Experience

☐ All entries are in reverse chronological order

☐ Each entry must include company's name and city/state but no zip code; Include commas after company names if the town and state directly follow

☐ Bullet format: begin with powerful verb + brief description of work accomplished + impact/result/why

☐ Each bullet is concise description of activity and achievement; include most impactful career skills; Do NOT include menial job functions such as: "Open and closed," "Filled orders," "Organized shelves," etc. You MUST include what it was you accomplished while doing the job or task you had at hand

Clubs, Organizations, Professional Affiliations, Volunteer, Sports, etc.

☐ Add if relevant and supportive of skills helpful to job to which you are applying

☐ List offices/leadership held within organizations

☐ This section is not required if there is no space available for it on the page

Other Miscellaneous

☐ Use consistent verb tense: If experience was in the past, use past-tense

☐ Exclude irrelevant personal information

☐ Spell out acronyms and abbreviations that are not universally known; spell out words like "Rd.," "St." Blvd.," etc.

☐ Check punctuation usage; appropriate use of capitalization; no periods at end of phrases/bullets

☐ Do not put your references or other people's names on your résumé

☐ Do not add **"References available upon request"** at the end of your résumé

☐ ***Should be no longer than two pages, max; If there is a second page, the information on the second page must meet the half-way mark of the second page. if not, you must condense the info on second page back to one page***.

Use this equation for help in creating bullet points…

ACTION VERB + SKILL/TASK + IMPACT/RESULT YOU HAD = BULLETED PHRASE