Colgate University
Center for Career Services

Résumé & Cover Letter guide

Did you know?

Employers spend approximately

15 seconds

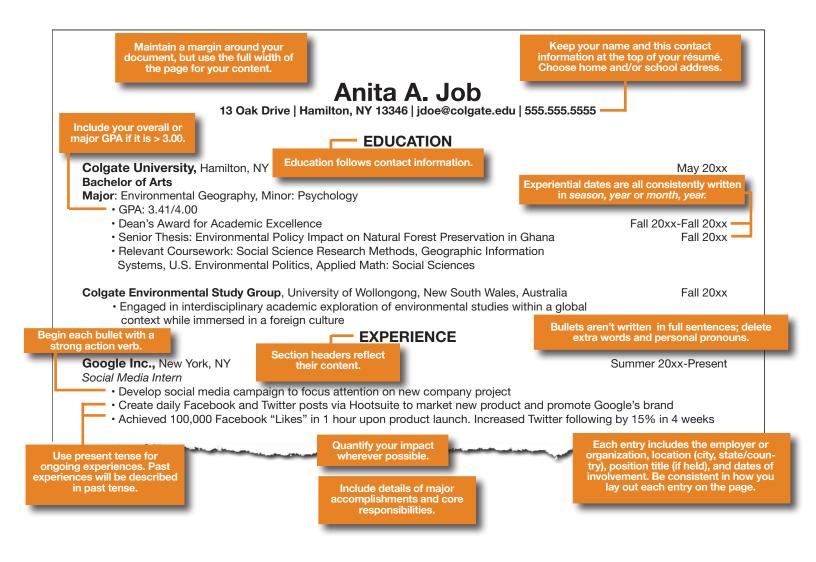scanning a résumé to form their initial impression of you as a candidate.

Make those seconds count.

When Will You Need a Résumé?

• When applying to jobs, internships, and in some cases, graduate and professional school

• When networking online and in person

• When attending career and internship fairs

• When applying to *Colgate Premier* (Colgate's formal recruiting) positions and other applications on *navi*GATE

　　• Having your résumé certified annually allows you to upload documents and participate in Colgate *Premier*

Starting Points for All Résumés

The example below highlights required components for résumés and gives tips to organize your document

Maintain a margin around your document, but use the full width of the page for your content.

Keep your name and this contact information at the top of your résumé. Choose home and/or school address.

Anita A. Job

13 Oak Drive | Hamilton, NY 13346 | jdoe@colgate.edu | 555.555.5555

Include your overall or major GPA if it is > 3.00.

EDUCATION

Education follows contact information.

Colgate University, Hamilton, NY   May 20xx
Bachelor of Arts
Major: Environmental Geography, Minor: Psychology

Experiential dates are all consistently written in *season, year* or *month, year*.

　　• GPA: 3.41/4.00
　　• Dean's Award for Academic Excellence   Fall 20xx-Fall 20xx
　　• Senior Thesis: Environmental Policy Impact on Natural Forest Preservation in Ghana   Fall 20xx
　　• Relevant Coursework: Social Science Research Methods, Geographic Information
　　 Systems, U.S. Environmental Politics, Applied Math: Social Sciences

Colgate Environmental Study Group, University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia   Fall 20xx
　　• Engaged in interdisciplinary academic exploration of environmental studies within a global
　　 context while immersed in a foreign culture

Bullets aren't written in full sentences; delete extra words and personal pronouns.

Begin each bullet with a strong action verb.

EXPERIENCE

Section headers reflect their content.

Google Inc., New York, NY   Summer 20xx-Present
Social Media Intern
　　• Develop social media campaign to focus attention on new company project
　　• Create daily Facebook and Twitter posts via Hootsuite to market new product and promote Google's brand
　　• Achieved 100,000 Facebook "Likes" in 1 hour upon product launch. Increased Twitter following by 15% in 4 weeks

Use present tense for ongoing experiences. Past experiences will be described in past tense.

Quantify your impact wherever possible.

Each entry includes the employer or organization, location (city, state/country), position title (if held), and dates of involvement. Be consistent in how you lay out each entry on the page.

Include details of major accomplishments and core responsibilities.

Listing Your Experiences

Brainstorm a list of all positions and activities in which you have been involved. In your experience section(s), select which experiences best showcase your strong candidacy by demonstrating your skills and non-academic qualifications. Include both paid and unpaid experiences: jobs, internships, community service, activities, clubs/organizations, and research projects.

Writing Bullet Points

For each experience, showcase your major accomplishments and core responsibilities by creating 2-3 bullets that answer the following three questions. Brainstorm the questions, then move your work into résumé writing format: Short statements that begin with a strong action verb and outline your impact (see page 16).

WHAT DID YOU DO?
What tasks or projects did you accomplish or complete?

HOW DID YOU DO IT?
Specifically outline your process and add quantifying or qualifying details where possible.

WHY DID IT MATTER?
What value did you add? What was your impact? What results did you achieve? Why was it important?

> **Consider:** Did you achieve the goal you set? Did you have a positive impact on the community or organization? Did you increase sales, productivity, or volume? Did you generate new business or increase the client base? Did you save the organization money? Did you design and/or institute any new systems and/or procedures? Did you suggest and/or help launch a new product, process or program? Did you deliver a presentation?

Annual Fund Student Caller, **Colgate University**, Hamilton, NY   Spring 20xx
- Cold-called 500 alumni to yield $5,000 over 10 weeks that will support university priorities
- Met team phone-a-thon goals to raise $660,000 from 5,407 donors in 24 hours
- Delivered exceptional customer service to constituents from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds

Showcasing Your Skills

- Create a list of your "hard skills:" foreign languages, software programs, social media, research tools (SPSS, etc.), or laboratory techniques.

- Qualify your level of competency (i.e.: "Conversant in Spanish")

- Avoid listing "soft skills" (i.e.: team player, organized, hard worker, great communicator). Rather, illustrate them with strong examples in a cover letter and interview.

- Strategize the placement of the skills section based on how critical the skills are to the position you seek.

SKILLS
Language: Proficient in Spanish
Technology: Basic HTML, JAVA, Adobe Photoshop, InDesign
Science Equipment & Techniques: Scanning Electron Microscopy, Fluorescence Microscopy
Certifications: CPR (Valid through April XXX)

General Résumé

This simplified version is great as a starter document and most appropriate for students unsure of their professional interests. As you build experiences and clarify your interests your résumé should become targeted to a specific industry and position.

Franky First-Year

13 Oak Drive | Hamilton, NY 13346 | ffirstyear@colgate.edu | 315.123.4567

Your name should be the largest font size on the page.

EDUCATION & HONORS

COLGATE UNIVERSITY, Hamilton, NY
Bachelor of Arts
- Intended Major: Biology; Intended Minor: Sociology

May 20xx

If you have not yet declared a major/minor, you may list it as Intended major or minor.

THE LATIN SCHOOL OF CHICAGO, Chicago, IL
- Graduated with honors
- Daniel Murphy Scholarship, awarded for academic merit

June 20xx

Your high school may be listed on your résumé as an underclassman OR beyond if you attended a school that employers may recognize.

ADVISING EXPERIENCE

Use descriptive section headers to group relevant content. For example, "Volunteer Experience," "Colgate Activities," or "Leadership Experience."

Student Assistant
COLGATE UNIVERSITY KECK RESOURCE CENTER, Hamilton, NY
- Identify and determine solutions for Mac, PC, scanner, and printer problems
- Wrote detailed procedures manual for student staff to increase troubleshooting efficiency
- Deliver exceptional customer service to students, faculty, staff, and guests under time-pressure

Fall 20xx-Present

You can use "Summers" (or another season) to capture seasonal work over multiple years.

Daniel Murphy Program Mentor
LAKE FOREST COLLEGE, Lake Forest, IL
- Collaborated with four colleagues and senior staff members to develop and execute an academic and internship program for 25 disadvantaged high school students
- Mentored, tutored, and advised six students developing college application materials
- Kept careful records of students' work hours; coordinated transportation for extracurricular activities

Summers 20xx-20xx

ACTIVITIES

Within each section, list your experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent first, based on end date).

President
LATIN AMERICAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION, Colgate University
- Manage and maintain a $2,000 budget annually; allocated funding for special events
- Organize two community-wide events by vetting vendors and coordinating 25-50 volunteers
- Encourage cross-cultural understanding by participating in discussions about Latino Culture at Colgate

Fall 20xx-Present

Disk Jockey
WRCU 90.1 HAMILTON, Colgate University
- Produce and air public service announcements weekly with minimal supervision
- Develop new procedures in collaboration with station managers and five other disc jockeys to increase station effectiveness and organization

Fall 20xx-Present

If multiple positions end at the same time, prioritize based on the most impressive or relevant experience.

Captain
INTRAMURAL SOCCER TEAM, The Latin School of Chicago
- Promoted sportsmanship amongst players and motivated team of 15 on and off field
- Balanced academics with coaching responsibilities achieving Dean's List concurrently with winning season

Fall 20xx-Present

SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

Categorize your skills section and qualify your level of proficiency where possible.

Computer: Excel, PowerPoint, Photoshop, Prezi, and Access (proficient)
Social Media: Instagram, Facebook, Vine, Pinterest, and Twitter
Languages: Spanish (conversational)
Certifications: CPR (expires April 20xx)

Targeted and Certified Résumés

WHAT DOES "TARGETED" MEAN?

As you begin your internship/job search, your application materials should be targeted to the industry, employer, and position. Targeting builds your credibility and demonstrates the strength of your candidacy by speaking to what is most important to the employer. **Our advisors can help you target your documents.** See examples on pages 10-15.

WHAT DOES "CERTIFIED" MEAN?

The Center for Career Services "certifies" a résumé when it meets professional standards for résumé writing, as outlined in the résumé rubric (pgs.6-7). While each résumé is unique, our advisors will guide you through the common standards and formatting for the industry you seek to enter.

WHO CAN CERTIFY MY RÉSUMÉ?

A professional Career Advisor or a Peer Career Advisor. This can be done during a 15-minute Quick Question or 30-minute appointment. Please call (315.228.7830) to schedule. To expedite the certification process, you should self-critique your résumé using the checklist on the following pages.

WHEN WILL MY RÉSUMÉ BE CERTIFIED?

When the document scores a rating of "excellent" or "acceptable with minor corrections" in each category, it is certified. Juniors' and seniors' résumés must be targeted to be certified. See criteria under 'targeting' in the rubric for specific goals of a targeted résumé, as well as examples on pages 10-15.

YOUR RÉSUMÉ MUST BE CERTIFIED EACH ACADEMIC YEAR TO MAINTAIN YOUR FULL *NAVI*GATE PERMISSIONS.

Employers will expect a more targeted version of your résumé each year. Seniors whose résumés were certified junior year maintain that status through graduation, although we highly recommend working with an advisor to target your document senior year.

WHY SHOULD I GET MY RÉSUMÉ CERTIFIED?

Having a résumé annually certified grants you eligibility to upload documents and submit applications through *navi*GATE, including for *Colgate Premier* (formal recruiting) internships and jobs. It also ensures your document will stand out as relevant to the employer among a competitive pool of applicants.

ONCE CERTIFIED, I AM DONE TWEAKING MY RÉSUMÉ, RIGHT?

Nope, not yet. Your résumé will be updated continually as your experiences and academics evolve. You will want to continue to enhance, target and strategically position your experiences. Even after your résumé is certified, you can see our advisors' feedback on your edits, but you are not *required* to have it critiqued again until the next academic year.

CAN I HAVE DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF A TARGETED OR CERTIFIED RÉSUMÉ?

Absolutely! You should have different targeted résumés for different unique opportunities. however, once you have achieved certification with one, you are not required to have all other résumés certified until the next academic year.

How to Deliver Your Documents

IN PERSON
- Print your documents one-sided on résumé paper in black and white (no color)
- Do not staple documents together (paper-clip is fine)
- Always have extra copies on hand
- Sign your cover letter in blue or black ink

VIA E-MAIL
- E-mail documents as attachments
- Do not copy and paste your document(s) in the body of an e-mail unless instructed to do so
- Save each document as a .pdf and name your document clearly (i.e. Last Name Résumé)
- Attach each document separately
- Include a brief message in the body of the e-mail that acknowledges your attached documents and expresses interest in the position. Thank them for their time and mention, if appropriate, when you will follow up

ONLINE APPLICATION
- Submit materials in the format requested (i.e. .pdf), named clearly
- Follow directions carefully. Unless otherwise specified, always submit a cover letter to differentiate your candidacy

CAREER SERVICES RÉSUMÉ RUBRIC

For a résumé to be "certified" by Career Services, it must score an excellent or acceptable with minor corrections for each section.			
Criteria	**Excellent**	**Acceptable with Minor Corrections**	**Needs Revisions**
Overall Style/ Appearance **Goal:** To ensure your document is easily read and appears polished.	• Cleanly fills one page without overcrowding • Order of information presented is consistent within each section • Information is only presented once • Centered on page with acceptable margins • Font is sized appropriately (no smaller than 10pt) and readable • Consistency in formatting (use of bold, italics)	• Page appears clean, but crowded, but not exceeding one page • Order of information presented is consistent within each section • Information is only presented once • Centered on page with acceptable margins • Font is sized appropriately (no smaller than 10pt) and readable • No more than three errors in formatting consistency (bold, italics, spacing, formatting)	• Document exceeds one page or does not fill the majority of one page • Document appears cluttered • Inconsistency in the order of information within one or more sections • The same information is presented more than once • Document is not centered • Margins are not appropriate • Font size is too small/too big or not consistent; Font is not easily read • Inconsistency in formatting (use of bold, italics)
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation **Goal:** To ensure résumé is polished and demonstrates your attention to detail.	• Résumé has no errors—spelling/ grammar is correct, punctuation and spacing are consistent	• Résumé contains 1-2 minor errors (spelling, grammar, punctuation) • Résumé has a pattern of a single error (i.e.: some bullets have periods, some do not)	• Résumé contains three or more individual errors • Résumé has a pattern of two or more errors
Contact Information **Goal:** To ensure an employer can easily contact you.	• Includes name, street address, e-mail, phone • Name is largest and most pronounced information in section • E-mail address used is professional • If included, LinkedIn™ profile/ portfolio has customized URL	• Includes name, street address, e-mail, phone • Name is not most pronounced information in section • E-mail address is not professional	• Missing one of the following: name, e-mail, street address, phone number • E-mail address used is unprofessional/inappropriate • If included, LinkedIn profile/ portfolio does not have customized URL
Education **Goal:** To convey academic qualifications and training.	• Degree is spelled out • Major/minors (if declared) and graduation month/year is indicated • Each institution attended includes name, location, dates • For undergraduates: Colgate is listed first, then other institutions in order of relevance • If listed, GPA is in correct format (maintain number of decimal places: e.g. 3.05/4.00 or 3.0/4.0) • If GPA other than cumulative is listed, it's identified (i.e. Major GPA) • Relevant honors and scholarships listed and include dates, and description if not indicated in the title. (May be in separate section) * Study abroad should be included, if applicable	• Degree is abbreviated (BA) • Major/minors (if declared) and graduation month/year is indicated • Each institution attended includes name, location, dates • For undergraduates: Colgate is listed first, then other institutions in order of relevance • If listed, GPA is in correct format • Relevant honors and scholarships listed and dated, but lack context	• Incorrect degree listed (not Bachelor of Arts) • Declared major/minor not indicated • Graduation date not listed (month, year) • Each institution attended does not include name, location, dates • Colgate is listed after another institution • Irrelevant/outdated high school information listed • If listed, GPA is not in correct format • GPA is rounded up

Experience **Goal:** To contextualize your skills and non-academic qualifications in a concise manner, showing their relevance to your employer.	• Each entry lists organization name, dates, position title (if needed), and location • Bullets begin with strong action verbs • All verbs reflect the correct verb tense • Bullets are concise, direct. • Bullets indicate one's impact or contribution to the organization with specificity. • Bullets are not written in complete sentences, and appropriately omit extra words (i.e.: articles, verbose phrases); contains no personal pronouns • Bullets are listed in order of importance within an experience • Results are quantified when possible • The most significant entries include at least one bullet point	• 1-2 entries omit(s) organization name, dates, position title (if needed), or location • Résumé has a pattern of a single error (i.e: no position titles) • Action verbs could be stronger • 1-2 individual errors in verb tense • Bullets could be more concise, direct. • Bullets indicate one's impact on the organization – could include more specificity • Bullets are written in complete sentences • Bullets are listed in order of importance within an experience • Results are quantified when appropriate • The most significant entries include at least one bullet point	• Three or more entries do not include organization name, dates, position title (if needed), or location • Bullets begin with weak action verbs • Multiple verb tenses are inconsistent with dates • Bullets are wordy, vague or do not indicate one's impact • Bullets contain personal pronouns • Bullets are not listed in order of importance within an experience • Results are not quantified when appropriate • Bullets are not included on significant entries • Irrelevant/outdated information listed (i.e.: high school) that would not be discussed in an interview
Skills/Interests/ Language/ Certifications sections (optional) **Goal:** To include skills or information that do not appear elsewhere on the résumé and, are relevant.	• Listings are concise and specific • Level of proficiency is indicated for skill-based entries (language, laboratory, technology)	• Listings are concise and specific • Level of proficiency is indicated for skill-based entries (language, laboratory, technology) • Personal qualities are listed	• Listings are wordy or vague • No level of proficiency indicated for skills-based entries (language, laboratory, technology)
Organization of Sections **Goal:** To group relevant information together to draw attention to experiences that resonate with your target employer; to increase read-ability.	• Section headers accurately reflect content • Adequate content exists within a section to substantiate the heading	• Section headers reflect content • Content of a section is not best placement of information (see comments)	• No use of sections or one "Experience" section lists all entries • Too many sections—not enough content to warrant a section • Section titles do not reflect content

To achieve certification, juniors and seniors' résumés must also meet the following criteria:

Targeting **Goal:** To ensure your strengths are strategically highlighted to your specific audience.	• Section headers are relevant to the targeted audience • Uses language represented in the job description, employer's materials, or that is industry-specific • The most relevant information is grouped and appears on the first half of the document • Most relevant bullets appear first under each entry • Listed coursework (optional) is tailored to the targeted field • The format/structure of the document is reflective of acceptable industry standards and trends • In formatting entries, the most relevant/strategic information among title and organization name is emphasized by positioning and style (bold, etc.)	• Audience is addressed, but more focus is required • Language could be more relevant to the reader (section titles, descriptions) • The most relevant information is grouped but does not appear on the first half of the document • The most relevant information could be further emphasized by formatting (bold, italics, etc.) • Listed coursework (optional) is tailored to the targeted field	• Résumé does not show evidence of being targeted to a specific purpose. (NOTE: This rating is assigned to all general résumés) • Section titles and descriptions do not support targeted field • The most relevant information is not grouped • The most relevant information does not appear on the first half of the page • The most relevant information is not emphasized by formatting (bold, italics, etc.) • Coursework (optional) is not tailored to the targeted field

Crafting Your Cover Letter

You will most likely be asked to submit a cover letter with your résumé. The cover letter is a separate document, designed to complement, not repeat, your résumé's content. It needs to accomplish two things:

- **Highlight your best examples of skills and experiences specifically relevant to the position you seek**
- **Use your research to directly connect your content to how it might add value to the employer's needs**

To begin writing a strong cover letter:

- Gather the job/internship description, a highlighter, and your résumé
- Spend time reading the employer's website to understand their purpose, goals, values, culture, language, and tone
- On the job/internship description, highlight the required and desired qualifications and characteristics sought
- On your résumé, highlight specific entries that evidence these desired skills, qualities, and qualifications. Brainstorm or replicate the table below. No need to aim for perfection yet; just get your thoughts on paper

Desired skills and qualifications	Relevant experiences	Specific example to demonstrate skills
Exceptional Customer Service	Student Assistant, Keck Resource Center	Helped emotional student whose computer crashed the day before thesis was due
Team-player	DJ, WRCU; Captain, Intramural soccer	Collaboratively developed and executed an academic and internship program

- From this table, choose your 2 or 3 strongest examples or note a theme that runs through your entries. Use the STARR method to develop these into concise and persuasive phrases that add depth beyond the résumé. This content will comprise the body paragraph(s) of your cover letter. See examples of how the STARR method is applied over the next few pages.

S Situation — State the situation you were in.

T Task — Talk about the task you were asked to complete.

A Action — Outline what action steps you took.

R Results — Describe the results in measurable terms.

R Relate — Relate how this example demonstrates the skills relevant for this job.

Cover Letter Tips:

- Cover letters should be no more than 1 page (3-5 paragraphs) as an undergraduate.
- Use the same font and font size as the résumé (size 11-12 pt).
- Employers make hiring decisions based on what a candidate can offer, not what an employer can offer the candidate. Be careful not to overemphasize what you want out of the experience. Use your space to show why you are a good fit.
- Do your research! It is impossible to write a strong cover letter without knowing your audience. Generic cover letters DO NOT impress and come across as you being lazy. You should write a unique cover letter for each opportunity.
- Choose a writing style reflective of the industry. When in doubt, err on the side of formality.
- Read your cover letter aloud before sending it. Be careful of misplaced words, run-on sentences, or awkward phrasing. Be sure to address it to the correct person/employer.

General Cover Letter:

Header:
Your Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Date

Mr./Ms./Dr. (First and) Last Name
Title
Name of Employer/ Organization
Street Address
City, State, and Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name: ———————————————————

> **Use the person's full name if you are unsure of gender (E.g. "Dear Cameron Marx"). If you are unable to find a name after a thorough search, you may use "Dear Hiring Manager" as a last resort.**

Opening Paragraph:
Grab your reader's attention within the first two lines. Avoid, "My name is…" or "It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application for…" Instead, try a creative approach to pack a punch. For example, "Designing, developing, and leading physical fitness training programs are my passions and expertise. As a physical trainer at Colgate University, I …"

- Indicate the reason for your letter and state the specific position to which you are applying.
- Tell how you learned of the position and name your referral (if applicable, and only if you have that person's consent).
- Make a connection to the employer. Why do you want to work for them? What excites you most about the position/employer? Be specific and show your research. Differentiate your letter from a generic copy that could be sent to any employer.
- End with a brief teaser (thesis statement) for topics you discuss in the remaining paragraphs.

> **Avoid outlining *details* of experiences in the first paragraph. Your middle paragraphs should elaborate on this content.**

Middle Paragraph(s):
- Share specific and concise examples of experiences or themes of your entries that demonstrate your skills and fit.
- Explain concretely how these skills/experiences will contribute to advancing a specific goal of this employer.
- Be sure to study the job posting to prioritize what to highlight. If you have more than one paragraph, prioritize your paragraphs in the order that reflects what is most important to the employer.
- Add depth and detail beyond what can be found on your résumé; tell your story.

Closing Paragraph:
- Confidently reiterate your interest in the position.
- Indicate that you look forward to discussing your candidacy with them further. You may mention that you will follow-up soon.
- Offer to provide any additional information if needed.
- Explain the best way to contact you (phone, Skype, or email).
- If you are studying off campus and anticipate challenges scheduling an interview, be proactive and suggest alternatives (e.g., Skype interviews, times in their time zone) to make it easy for employers to contact you.
- Thank the employer for their consideration.

> **Describe only your qualifications and potential. Do not call attention to parts of the job description that do not match your experience.**

Close with "Sincerely," "Sincerely Yours," "Yours," or similar
Type your name ———————————————————

> **If printed, leave room to sign your name. This is not necessary if you are sending an electronic version.**

TARGETED EXAMPLE FOR NON-PROFIT SECTOR
Sample Job Description:
POSITION: Summer Intern
EMPLOYER: Somewhere Out There (SOT)

ABOUT US: The SOT Foundation is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization reinventing politics for the millennial generation through innovative social and political action. Through civic engagement, leadership, development and advocacy work, we're working to build a hands-on democracy of engaged and educated young citizens across the state. Our internship teaches social change through political and social engagement, and workshops from SOT staff and seasoned politicos. The internship is focused on building grassroots campaigns that impact state- and local-level policies affecting young people. Our expert team teaches interns Colorado's legislative and political systems soup to nuts: how to lobby, run grassroots campaigns, and enact progressive change on the state level.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR INTERNS TO:
- Gain skills through hands-on field work and workshops
- Use new media tools to get your voice heard and engage thousands
- Utilize online and offline forms of outreach for grassroots action
- Register and use grassroots tactics to register voters
- Recruit and train volunteers for issues they care about

Targeted Non-Profit Cover Letter:

Dear Mr. Pine:

As a fellow Coloradan with a passion for advancing social change among my generation, I am excited to apply for the Somewhere Out There (SOT) summer internship. After learning more about SOT through my classmate and former intern, Amanda Smith, I am confident I can add value to this organization. SOT, in particular, interests me because it offers a unique model of utilizing new social media trends and traditional political activism. My academic studies as a Peace and Conflict major coupled with my grassroots and campaigning experiences have prepared me for this position.

A week-long service trip to Haiti initially ignited my interest in civic engagement and led me to pursue opportunities to expand my exposure and experience in political and social activism. For example, this past summer I had the opportunity to gain campaign experience as a Field Intern at Donnelly for State Senate in Indiana. During this time, I acquired direct experience in a multifaceted campaign and was tasked with engaging voters in person and online. Whether discussing current issues at community forums or through Twitter and Facebook updates (#VoteDonnelly), I maintained a dialogue with voters in order to establish our candidate's presence in the race. It was through my new social media efforts that we saw an increase in millennial registration by 15%. I look forward to contributing this same energy to SOT's outreach efforts given your priority of reinventing politics for the millennial generation.

Furthermore, I understand that direct contact with prospective supporters is highly effective in advancing a candidate or issue. As a member of the College Democrats at Colgate, I cold-called approximately 500 people to recruit new members for the party. This was not an easy task, as I was often faced with the challenge of hang-ups and uninterested callers. I had to convey my enthusiasm and authenticity about our message to truly engage and persuade callers to listen and subsequently register. I would bring the same tactics to the SOT summer position.

Focusing my passion through the SOT Foundation under the guidance of seasoned staff and politicos would help prepare me to make real change for our state and our millennial constituents. I welcome the opportunity to provide you with additional information regarding my candidacy. I can be contacted at 315.123.4567 or nnonprofit@colgate.edu.

Make an instant connection to the employer.

Showcase your shared values and best fit. Use the job description and webpage to reflect brand and culture.

These specific examples demonstrate that you possess desired skills and characteristics from the job description.

SITUATION
TASK
ACTION
RESULT
RELATE

Include contact information in the final paragraph to make a callback easier for the employer.

Targeted Non-Profit Résumé:

NATALIE NON-PROFIT
13 Oak Drive | Box B235 | Hamilton, NY 13346 | nnonprofit@colgate.edu | 315.123.4567

EDUCATION & HONORS

COLGATE UNIVERSITY, Hamilton, NY   May 20xx
Bachelor of Arts
- Major: Peace and Conflict Studies
- Major GPA 3.63/4.00; Cumulative GPA: 3:41/4.0
- Dean's Award for Academic Excellence (Fall 20xx-Fall 20xx)
- Advanced Coursework: Contemporary Political Philosophy; Politics of Poverty;
  International Political Economy; Power, Racism and Privilege; Politics of Race & Ethnicity

THE LATIN SCHOOL OF CHICAGO, Chicago, IL   June 20xx
- Graduated with honors
- Daniel Murphy Scholarship for academic merit

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Field Intern, **Donnelly for State Senate,** Indianapolis, IN   Summer 20xx
- Gained exposure to major political campaign operations at headquarters and remotely
  engaged voters in dialogue about high-profile issues at community forums

Member, **College Democrats,** Colgate University   Summer 20xx
- Recruit new members by cold-calling approximately 500 people during a local calling campaign

NON-PROFIT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Council for International Educational Exchange, Hanoi, Vietnam   Spring 20xx
- Engaged in academic program and fieldwork focused on the international and local impact
  of community development and globalization
- Expanded social and political awareness by learning from grassroots movements, living with
  host families, meeting with NGOs, corporations and government agencies while focused on
  issues such as dams, mining, slums, HIV/AIDS, and agriculture policy
- Developed and created 2 reports on human rights abuses

Finding Money For Social Change Grant-Writing Course, Colgate University   Spring 20xx
- Gained overview of foundations, non-profits, and grant funding, and solicited proposals
  for grant applications from local organizations during a 9-week, non-credit class

Educational Network for Global & Grassroots Exchange, Spartanburg, SC   Summer 20xx
- Participated in vision planning and goal setting sessions to create and sustain
  student-created organizations
- Co-facilitated 4 workshops on strategies to expand study abroad experiences with
  opportunities for domestic grassroots activism

SERVICE AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Farm Volunteer, **Community Supported Agriculture,** Hamilton, NY   Fall 20xx-Present
- Connect issues of food security, social justice, and local economies with farming by
  participating in community discussions
- Plant seasonal crops and learn inner workings of community-supported organic farm
  by volunteering 3 hours/week

Volunteer Relief Work, **Colgate Alternative Break Trip,** Cap-Haitien, Haiti   Spring 20xx
- Collaborated on a team of 10 students to clean up post-flood debris to make neighborhoods
  safer for residents
- Engaged in discussions about the impact of natural disasters on Haitian culture

Youth Mentor, **Sidekicks,** Colgate University   Fall 20xx-Present
- Build and maintain an ongoing, three-year relationship with a local child to foster
  self-esteem and positive attitudes towards education
- Foster campus-town relationship through community involvement and positive relationships

Benefit Coordinator, **Student Global AIDS Campaign,** Colgate University   Fall 20xx-Present
- Planned and executed semi-formal benefit event that raised over $1,000 for HIV/AIDS charities

SKILLS &INTERESTS
Language: Proficient in Spanish, Conversational Vietnamese
Technical: Mindcoast GrantWave, Photoshop, InDesign
Social Media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest
Travel: Extensive travel throughout China, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam

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Callout notes:

Use "Relevant Coursework" to demonstrate knowledge in relevant topical areas – especially those in which you have yet to gain experience.

Create targeted sections to group experiences together that are relevant to the position, and increase readability.

Prioritize your most prominent experiences that directly apply to the position description.

Use industry language strategically.

Highlight relevant specialized training in a separate heading.

Include content reflective of the header.

Omit irrelevant content. You may have amassed other experiences, but select and include only those most related to the desired position.

List skills beyond those that are "required" or "desired," as they may give you an edge above other applicants.

TARGETED EXAMPLE FOR TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY
Sample Job Description:

POSITION: Software Developer Engineer (entry-level)
EMPLOYER: Amazing Online Store (AOS)

DESCRIPTION:
Do you want to own cutting edge technology, solve new problems and see the impact of your successes? AOS is growing, and we need SDEs who move fast, are capable of breaking down and solving complex problems, and get things done. SDEs work on real world problems on a global scale, own their systems end-to-end, and technology that impacts hundreds of millions of customers globally.
An SDE can expect to design flexible and scalable solutions for some of the most complex challenges in large-scale computing by utilizing your skills in data structures, algorithms, and object-oriented programming. Work on a small development team in Web Services, ecommerce Services, Marketplace, Operations, or Platform Technologies and Retail.

Basic Qualifications
- Bachelor's degree in computer science, computer engineering or related technical discipline
- Must be a current senior or graduated within the last 12 months

Preferred Qualifications
- Strong, object-oriented design and coding skills (CC+ and/or Java preferably on a UNIX or Linux platform)
- Knowledge of Perl or other scripting languages
- Experience with distributed (multi-tiered) systems, algorithms, and relational databases
- Experience in optimization mathematics (linear programming, nonlinear optimization)
- Ability to effectively articulate technical challenges and solutions
- Deal well with ambiguous undefined problems; think abstractly
- Previous technical internships

Targeted Technology Cover Letter:

Dear Ms. Roberts:

Thank you for answering my questions during the Amazing Online Store (AOS)'s information session last week at Colgate University. I enjoyed learning about the innovative ways AOS is employing technology to provide service and to value to its global customer base. From your remarks, and through my networking with Colgate alumni employed at AOS, I know my problem solving and communication skills are well-suited to the culture at AOS. I am eager to apply for a Software Developer Engineer position in your Seattle office.

As a Computer Science major, I have applied Python, C/C++ and Java to solve complex problems through classroom projects, work experience, and independent learning initiatives. During a semester-long design project, I partnered with three classmates to develop a multi-tiered system for Career Services. It allows for the collection, review, and management of employer data. While I contributed to design of application and data tiers, my technical responsibilities primarily focused on creating a user interfaces for mobile and desktop platforms. I was required to work closely with our customer to elicit user needs and interpret them into clear technical specifications for a robust and functional product. I learned first-hand the vital role of effective interpersonal and technical communication in the software development. I am excited to bring this team approach to the SDE position at AOS. This experience, alongside my liberal arts education, will prepare me to excel under AOS' culture of global growth, innovation, and impact.

I would be pleased to provide you with additional information or samples of my work. I look forward to following up with you regarding this position. Alternatively, please feel free to contact me at 330-555-1212 or pprogrammer@colgate.edu. Thank you for your consideration.

Annotations:
- Writing is concise. Tone is confident, not overly aggressive.
- Show your research.
- Start with your best selling point. Grab their attention by using their language
- **SITUATION**
- **TASK**
- **ACTION**
- **RESULT**
- **RELATE**
- Use good proactive follow-up strategy to show initiative.

Targeted Technology Résumé:

Pasqual Programmer

100 Main Street · Worcester, MA 10001
(330) 555-1212 · pprogrammer@colgate.edu

EDUCATION

Colgate University—Hamilton, NY   May 20xx
- Bachelor of Arts   Computer Science GPA 3.1/4.00
- Double Major: Computer Science and Philosophy
- Dean's Award for Academic Excellence (Fall 20xx to present)
- Patriot League Academic Honor Roll (Fall 20xx to present)

> *List Major GPA, as it was stronger than overall GPA, and above 3.0.*

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- Programming Languages: Java, MIPS, Python, Haskell, HTML, C, C++, C#
- Software: Casper, Terminal, Photoshop, Illustrator
- Coursework: Discrete Structures, Operating Systems, Analysis of Algorithms, Programming Languages, Computer Graphics, Database Management Systems, Principles of Design for Large Systems, Computer Networks
- Design for mobile platforms
- Computer Diagnostics

> *Highlight programming languages, software platforms, and other relevant technical skills that apply to the position.*

CLIENT SUPPORT EXPERIENCE

Cloud-based Design, **Course Project—Colgate University**   Spring 20xx - present
- Collaborated with three classmates and Career Services' staff to build interactive employer database
- Developed documents and spreadsheets with client, addressing technology capabilities, goals, and solutions
- Created architecture and desired functionality; modeled wireframes using Axure
- Delivered platform functionality on mobile and desktop platforms per client's specifications and on schedule

> *This entry is listed first in this section, as it's the most recent.*

> *Reference course project as relevant professional experience.*

> *Use industry language.*

Student Technical Staff, **Information Technology Services—Colgate University**   Fall 20xx – Spring 20xx
- Expedited routing and resolution of work orders by prioritizing inbound calls to customer help desk
- Troubleshot technical difficulties related to smart classroom equipment for faculty and alumni presenters while successfully resolving classroom issues within an average of two-minutes
- Provided technical assistance for all Colgate-supported hardware as well as application installation and user guidance for software products

NCAA DIVISION 1 ATHLETICS

Varsity Swimming—**Colgate University – Hamilton, NY**   Fall 20xx- present
- Devote over 20 hours/week to practice, competition, and travel in nationally ranked program; maintain strenuous training program off season
- Optimize individual and team performance by analyzing practice films weekly and incorporating coach's feedback, leading to improved technique during competition
- Provide athletic and academic mentorship to 5 younger swimmers, creating positive team dynamic
- Visit local elementary classroom monthly to model value of academic persistence

> *Frame your athletic experiences by focusing on transferable skills gained, not just the sport.*

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Member, **Senior Class Gift Committee – Hamilton, NY**   Fall 20xx- present
- Inspire giving through targeted outreach to fellow classmates, building stronger connections to campus initiatives
- Solicited 25 Colgate seniors and tracked giving status through Google Docs to reach 100% participation goal

> *Quantify results to share impact.*

Member, **Student-Athlete Advisory Committee – Hamilton, NY**   Fall 20xx– Spring 20xx
- Collaborated with 29 peers to advocate for student-athlete interests and welfare. Promoted community involvement and leadership development

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Head Coach (2014), *Assistant* (2011-2014) **Gators Swimming – Worcester, MA**   Summers 20xx – 20xx
- Supervised, coached and motivated 50 athletes (4-18 years) to first state championship
- Planned and implemented age group training program to maximize swimmers' development

TARGETED EXAMPLE FOR FINANCE INDUSTRY
Sample Job Description:

POSITION: Financial Advisor (entry-level)
EMPLOYER: Incredible Financial Group (IFG)

Success, for you and your clients. Earn the ability to create your own financial success through helping clients enjoy their own. You don't need prior finance experience to join us, but you do need energy, great people skills, a strong work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit. We'll provide the training, resources and support you'll need to do better than your best.

What a financial advisor does:
- Identifies and sets appointments with potential clients
- Meets with clients to assess their financial needs
- Develops a customized financial plan to address each client's goals
- Maintains strong relationships with clients, helping to track their progress over time

Some of the features of this position include:
- One-on-one training from seasoned local leaders in the financial planning leaders
- A comprehensive training program that includes coaching in financial planning, marketing techniques, consultative selling, client service, and regulatory compliance
- Local and national marketing support, including brand advertising, that will help to expand and grow client relationships

Targeted Finance Cover Letter:

Dear Hiring Manager:

In learning of an opening for a Financial Advisor at Incredible Financial Group (IFG), I was immediately drawn to the opportunity. After some extensive research, it became clear that I could contribute greatly to the the IFG' financial advising team by utilizing my established skills in finance. Over the past few years at Colgate University, I have gained the necessary skills through my work in VITA and Colgate's Budget Allocation Committee that will allow me to excel in this role.

As a tax preparer through Colgate's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA), I have gained client-centered skills which will transition me seamlessly to a financial advisor. I was pleased to see face-to-face client interactions would be a main role of Financial Advisors at IFG. During tax season, I manage a client load of 15 local families to compile their Federal and State tax documents. Through this work I have grown accustomed to building rapport with a diverse body of clients with complex financial considerations. Additionally, I completed ongoing IRS training, including augmenting my understanding of tax credits. This allows me to be a reputable source for my clients. My ability to provide clients with accurate information and sound advice will assist me to maintain a return client base for IFG.

Moreover, my involvement with the Budget Allocation Committee has afforded me insight into managing campus funds and making sound financial decisions. Our committee managed a budget of $700,000. These funds are ultimately distributed to student organizations. To determine organization's financial need, our committee reviewed proposals for roughly 125 student organizations, and subsequently assessed each organizations' fiscal responsibility and the potential value of the projects to campus life. As a result, I developed awareness for how to effectively manage and distribute funds while collaborating with my peers to reach these important decisions. Not only will I bring these skills to IFG in advising potential clients, but will welcome the opportunity to collaborate with peers and seasoned advisors in order to offer clients and the IFG team, a positive experience.

I am confident that my past experiences have provided me with the skills to succeed. I welcome the opportunity to have a formal interview so I may discuss my potential for this role. Please feel free to contact me at (315) 228-4445 or at ffinance@colgate.edu. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

After calling HR to determine the contact's name, was directed to use "Hiring Manager."

A good thesis statement draws the reader in by highlighting what you'll reference in your body paragraph.

Use language to confirm your fit with the culture of the employer.

Add a fuller description of the experience beyond résumé bullet points.

SITUATION
TASK
ACTION
RESULT
RELATE

Targeted Finance Résumé:

FIONA FINANCE
51 Ampersand Street, Albany, NY 12202
315-228-4445 • ffinance@colgate.edu • www.LinkedIn.com/in/FFinance

EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

Colgate University, Hamilton, NY   May 20xx

Bachelor of Arts   **GPA: 3.48/4.00**

- Major/Minor: Chemistry/Economics
- Dean's Award for Academic Excellence (all semesters)
- Alumni Memorial Scholar – awarded to top 200 applicants in class

Wall Street Prep, General Assembly, New York, NY   Summer 20xx

- Completed self-directed intensive Advanced Excel focused on valuation and financial modeling
- Independently constructed models accounting for discounted cash flow, public comparables, leveraged buy outs, and mergers and acquisitions

Colgate University Extended Study, Dhaka, Bangladesh   Winter 20xx

- Completed 3-week research study examining NGO's role in alleviating poverty in developing nation
- Conducted SWOT analysis of NGO's impact through case studies and site visits with local agencies

BUSINESS & FINANCE EXPERIENCE

Federal Corporation, Consumer Finance Research Intern, Washington, D.C.   Summer 20xx

- Reviewed pricing data; used Excel for statistical analysis to detect price disparities between banks
- Compiled economic data to analyze risk factors facing banks. Monitored trends within consumer groups
- Conducted research for unbanked households: examined frequency of foreclosures and reverse mortgages, growth potential, factors producing inadequate retirement income

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, Tax Advisor, Colgate University   Spring 20xx-present

- Filed federal and state tax returns on behalf of 15 low-income residents resulting in $20,000+ returned revenues
- Completed IRS training program and passed IRS tax preparer test
- Maintained ongoing training to monitor changing tax credits to maximum returns for clients

ACTIVITIES

Budget Allocations Committee, Board Member, Colgate University   Spring 20xx

- Selected as one of eight students to allocate $700,000 in student initiative funding
- Reviewed proposals from up to 125 student organizations; assessed fiscal responsibility and potential value of projects to campus life

Delta Delta Delta Sorority, Recruitment Chair, Colgate University   Fall 20xx

- Pitched to local businesses yielding $40,000+ for St. Jude's Hospital with chapter members
- Coordinated receptions for potential and current members to highlight sorority's philanthropic successes and build community

SKILLS & INTERESTS

Technology: Proficient with Capital IQ, Bloomberg, Excel, Taxwise, and PowerPoint

Interests: Personal investing – realized 20% gain in portfolio since 2013

Language: Conversant in Spanish

Résumé and Cover Letter Action Verb Cheat Sheet

Planning Verbs				
Administered	Determined	Forecasted	Prepared	Revised
Allocated	Developed	Formulated	Prioritized	Strategized
Anticipated	Devised	Identified	Researched	Studied
Commissioned	Evaluated	Planned	Reserved	Tailored

Organizing Verbs				
Acquired	Classified	Designed	Linked	Scheduled
Activated	Collected	Dispatched	Logged	Secured
Adjusted	Committed	Established	Obtained	Selected
Allocated	Confirmed	Facilitated	Ordered	Simplified
Arranged	Contracted	Housed	Procured	Sought
Assembled	Coordinated	Implemented	Programmed	Suggested
Assessed	Customized	Incorporated	Recruited	Tracked
Authorized	Delegated	Instituted	Retrieved	
Cataloged	Designated	Issued	Routed	

Executing Verbs				
Acted	Conducted	Exercised	Performed	Shipped
Administered	Displayed	Forwarded	Processed	Sold
Collected	Distributed	Installed	Produced	Stocked
Completed	Enacted	Operated	Proved	Transacted

Leadership Verbs				
Adjusted	Directed	Inspired	Overhauled	Stimulated
Analyzed	Discovered	Judged	Oversaw	Strengthened
Assessed	Elected	Launched	Pioneered	Supervised
Built	Encouraged	Led	Prohibited	Tightened
Certified	Established	Licensed	Promoted	Trained
Chaired	Examined	Maintained	Refined	Updated
Compared	Explored	Measured	Regulated	
Controlled	Facilitated	Modified	Reviewed	
Corrected	Founded	Monitored	Revised	
Developed	Inspected	Officiated	Scrutinized	

Problem Solving Verbs				
Alleviated	Created	Diagnosed	Investigated	Revitalized
Analyzed	Debugged	Engineered	Recommended	Satisfied
Brainstormed	Decided	Foresaw	Remodeled	Solved
Collaborated	Deciphered	Formulated	Repaired	Synthesized
Conceived	Detected	Found	Revamped	Theorized

Communicating Verbs				
Adapted	Deliberated	Informed	Publicized	Supplemented
Addressed	Demonstrated	Instructed	Questioned	Surveyed
Clarified	Drafted	Interpreted	Referred	Synthesized
Communicated	Edited	Interviewed	Reinforced	Systematized
Composed	Educated	Justified	Reported	Taught
Concluded	Explained	Lectured	Represented	Tested
Consulted	Extracted	Marketed	Shaped	Translated
Convinced	Greeted	Mediated	Specified	Transmitted
Corresponded	Highlighted	Moderated	Spoke	Verified
Critiqued	Illustrated	Negotiated	Submitted	Welcomed
Dedicated	Improvised	Persuaded	Suggested	Wrote
Defined	Indicated	Presented	Summarized	