



Resumes & Cover Letters

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@myCareerqueensu



**GOT
CAREER
QUESTIONS?**



Agenda

- Purpose of Application Documents
- Your Target & Research
- Resume Sections & Strategies
- Drafting your resume
- Cover letter Sections & Strategies
- Evaluating Cover Letter Examples

How do you know
your application is
“successful”?

What is the
purpose of an
application?





Warm-up

Application #1

- 4 years experience as organic farmer
- 2 years as coordinator of NFU New Farm Project, including organizing workshops
- Post-grad diploma in Ecotourism Management at Fleming College
- Bachelor of Arts: History Major, Math Minor



Warm-up

Application #2

- 14 years work at U of T & Queen's Career Centres
- Specialized knowledge in resumes from training for Resume Clinic and 2 years working in Employer Relations
- Experience as employer including posting jobs, receiving resumes, and doing interviews
- Presentation skills honed during Bachelor of Education and hundreds of career workshops

Warm-up

**Who do you want to hire?
Why?**



The Challenge is...

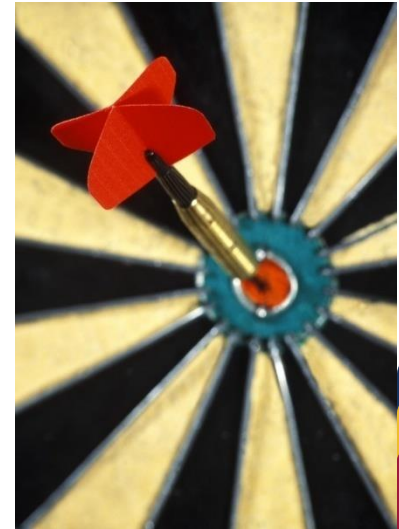
To look like where you're going,
NOT where you've been.



Write down your application GOAL(s)
i.e. WHO IS THE AUDIENCE; WHAT IS THE
JOB?

E.g.

- policy analysis
- consulting
- management
- Program development....
- Don't know? See a career counsellor or prof/mentor



Reading a Job Ad

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

Business Analyst - McKinsey


What
competencies
do they seek?

QUALIFICATIONS

The Canadian Offices Vancouver, Calgary, Montreal and Toronto and select Global offices (ex – Seattle) are looking for students with a proven record of

exceptional academic and extracurricular achievement.

You must possess an aptitude for numbers, critical analysis and problem solving, as well as outstanding interpersonal skills. In addition, McKinsey values resourcefulness, creativity, tenacity, independence, energy, responsibility, and self-confidence.



What
competencies
do they seek?

Business Analyst - McKinsey

POSITION DESCRIPTION

You will experience management consulting at McKinsey by working on top management problems as part of one of our client teams or by participating in one of our research and development projects. Business Analysts are consultants on the cross-tenure teams we assemble to **address clients' needs**. Not only is this team-based approach the best way to serve clients, it is also the best way for you to learn consulting and build your business and professional skills. As a member of the team, you will **collaborate** with senior consultants on every part of the consulting process: from **identifying issues and researching solutions** to **presenting** to senior management teams and working side by side with clients to **implement team recommendations**. Working at McKinsey is both challenging and rewarding, but it is also an unparalleled opportunity to hone your **research, problem-solving, and people skills**. You may work in any of the industry sectors we serve and in any functional area.

Do the Research

- **91% of hiring managers** agree that **applicants who do research** on your company or the position they're applying for will **receive greater consideration** than those who send a generic application.

Use the job ad to find important information about what the employer is looking for:

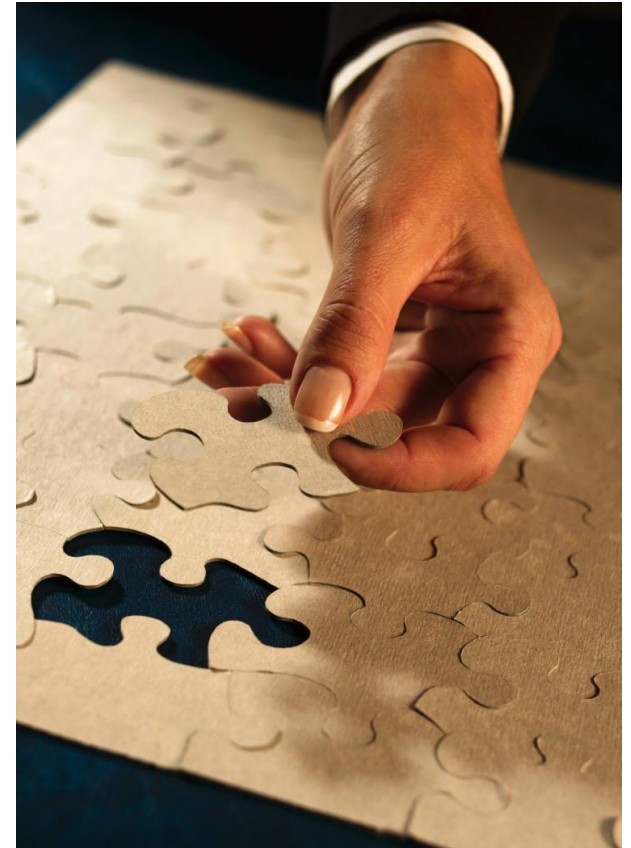
- Company Values
- Responsibilities
- Work Environment / Team
- Qualifications
- Required Skills

You can also gather info from:

- Employer web-site
- On-campus recruiting events
- Social Media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Visit general career or industry sites for general entry level job descriptions for your field/industry
 - National Occupational Classification

(Possible) Parts of the Resume

- Heading (Name, contact info)
- Professional Profile/Skills Summary/Objective
- Education
- Experience (Paid and unpaid)
 - Working
 - Volunteering
 - Extracurricular
- Other:
 - Interests
 - Achievements/Awards
 - Professional Development, Memberships



Objective vs. Summary?

Objective:

- Can help you find focus
- Is it saying something not said elsewhere?
- Formula:

Position + Environment + Value
(Who you are + What you do + Why/How?)

Summary of Skills:

- Can highlight key skills with proof
- Short, focused, easy to read
- “Roadmap” to rest of resume



Summary of Everyone...

- Strong team player with ability to work independently as well
- Excellent communication skills
- Cross-disciplinary adaptability
- Leadership
- Academic excellence

Professional Profile

Job-specific

- MPA candidate, Queen's University, 2018
- Program development, evaluation and supervision demonstrated in summer position as program supervisor in community agency
- Knowledge of federal human rights and PIPEDA legislation gained through MPA project.

Transferable/ Work-style

- Classroom and workplace familiarity with economic policy and international trade.
- Project management skills developed as University of Ottawa student government leader
- Focused approach to learning/absorbing new information

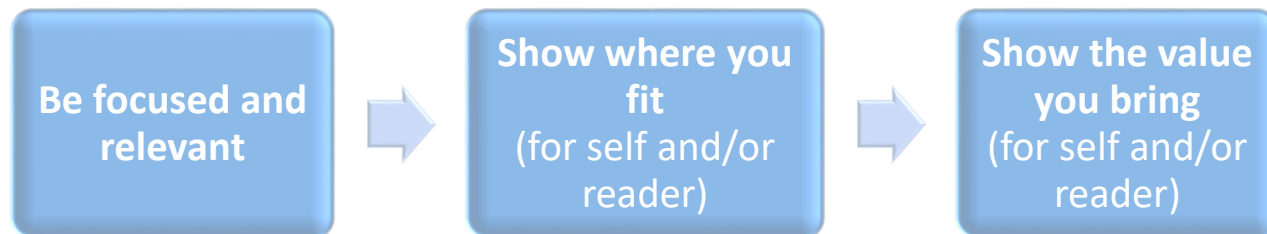
Resume - Profile

Do's

- Base it off of job description
- Give examples
- Include numbers
- Include accomplishments
- Use it as a roadmap

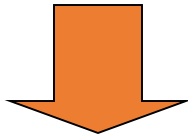
Don'ts

- State all skills you have
- List skills without examples
- Speak in general terms without specifics
- Focus on skills that are not relevant to new position



Education

Name the degree
Consider emphasizing



Give dates and
status



Master of Public Administration
Queen's University, Kingston ON

- Concentration in
- Major project topic on...
- Pending courses include:

2017-present
(candidate)

Bachelor of Arts (Honours), History
University of Guelph, Guelph, ON

2014



- Relevant courses include: Political theory...

Include:

University,
Town &
Province



Consider including thesis
or major projects and
selected courses

If you include an award,
remember to indicate
what it was for



What counts as experience?

Everything

What experiences should I include?


Relevant experiences

Why are experiences important?

How you have performed previously is the best indicator of future performance!



What is Experience?

- Experience is any place where you have gained a skill!
This can include paid AND unpaid work, for example:
 - Employment
 - Volunteering
 - Unpaid Internships
 - School Projects
 - Special Courses
 - Boards/Associations
 - Paid or unpaid, you gain skills from everything you do.
 - What experiences do you have that have gained you skills that will be useful in your future jobs? - write on worksheet
- 



Experience

Common Challenges

- Position in resume doesn't reflect its importance
- Doesn't capture skills that are transferable to the job you're applying for
- Statements limited to tasks or responsibilities

Success Strategies

- Customized Headings
Flexible Order
- Review for match between job position and resume
- Focus on how, not only what
(Accomplishment Statements)



Experience Organization

How do you organize your experience?

WORK

VOLUNTEER
EXTRACURRICULAR

RELEVANT
PROFESSIONAL

ADDITIONAL

POLICY EXPERIENCE

LEADERSHIP
EXPERIENCE



Policy-related Experience

Role (context, if not paid)

Dates


Organization, Location

- Details, description

Residence Life Intern
2017

May 2016-Apr,

University of Alberta, Edmonton AB

- Assisted in the development of and rolled out new policy against sexual violence on campus
 - Member of residence life judiciary board dealing with student disciplinary hearings
- 



Health Administration Experience

Student Researcher (thesis)

Sep 2014- Apr 2015

- Life Sciences Dept, Queen's University, Kingston ON
- Employed quantitative and qualitative research methodology while conducting 4th year thesis research on...

Clinical Trials Clerk

Summers 2012, 2014

Queen's Clinical Trials Group, Kingston ON

- Collected data and administered regulatory reviews on 6 active clinical trials in the specialties of dermatology, cardiology and general internal medicine
- Re-hired in 2014 and given additional caseload

Additional Experience

- Additional experience includes working at a golf course, math tutoring and clerical summer work
- 

Experience Descriptions

- Create one line to summarize role
- Describe skills using active language: verbs & adverbs –
 - *developed and delivered curriculum for three tutorials per week to 125 third-year students*
- Add quantity –
 - *organized 12 displays on ...*
- Add quality –
 - *helped deepen understanding of through research on...*
- Show impact or results, effect –
 - *Data collected subsequently used during strategic planning review for the company...*



Experience

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(Accomplishment Statements)

Accomplishment Statements

For each experience on the resume, see if the statements explicitly answer the following questions:

- How many/how much?
- Why did I/we do this?
- What was the result of doing this?
- What skills did I learn or develop?
- Why was this important?

Write what you can
to answer the
missing questions
beside the
experience on your
resume

Write the number of questions your description currently answers beside each experience (___ out of 5)

Accomplishment Statements



Accurately tracked + **daily cash deposits for travel agency** +
resulting in only one error of \$.04 over 4 months



Accomplishment Statements

Administrative Assistant

Summer 2011

Legasys Corporation, Kingston, ON

- Updated tracking system
- Observed innovation, growth, and subsequent sale of their VOIP tool
- Learned PHP
- Presented project summary to senior management team

Accomplishment Statements

Administrative Assistant

Summer 2011

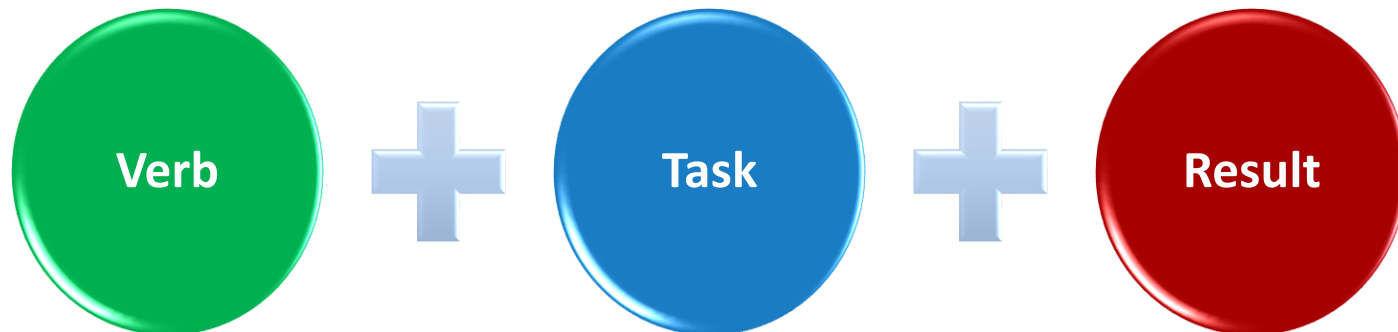
Legasys Corporation, Kingston, ON

- Updated, vetted and re-organized tracking system for 1000+ client records in 5-year old computer software development company, increasing system efficiency by 30%
- Contributed to a 10-person team, by conducting background research contributing to creation and subsequent sale of VOIP tool to Bell Canada
- Taught myself PHP in order to design and develop an administrative section on the company intranet (which is still in use)
- Delivered project summary to senior management team at the annual executive retreat upon request of lead supervisor

Accomplishment Statements

Try to write one accomplishment statements on the worksheet and share them with the person next to you.

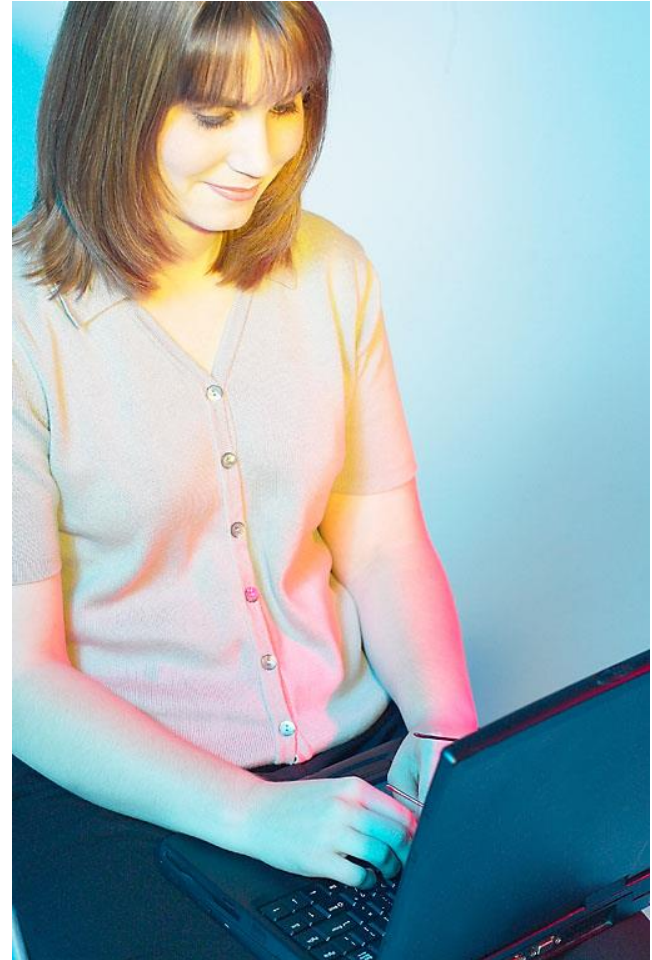
If you have your current resume with you, try to re-write or improve the statements you already have.



The Cover Letter

ALWAYS expected
(whether it's mentioned
or not)

NOT just your resume in
longer sentences





Standing Out

Strategies for making your cover letter stand out:

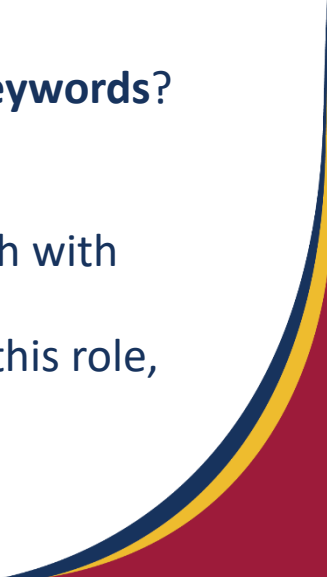
1. Know yourself

- What do you want?
- What are your skills/strengths?
- What makes you unique?

2. Know the **company/role** – do your research

- What is the company known for?
- What is the company currently struggling with?
- What does this specific role entail? What are the **keywords**?

3. Explain the “**fit**” – put it together

- How do your strengths, skills and experiences match with what the employer does and needs
 - Think like a hiring manager, what do they need for this role, and how can you provide it.
- 



1 – Know Yourself

- What skills do you have?
 - Program – major map, courses, projects
 - Undergrad
 - Experiences
- What makes you unique?
 - Knowledge of industry/area
 - Unique experience
 - Passions

What skills do you have?

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

A professional degree in Public Administration can equip you with valuable and versatile skills, such as:

Strategic Thinking:

- Articulate the political, institutional, legal, and administrative context in which policy is made and implemented.
- Recognize the values and principals of Canadian democracy.

Engagement & Communication:

- Engage and collaborate with diverse stakeholders and partners.
- Demonstrate high quality, professional verbal and written communication skills.
- Prepare high quality written and oral material.

Analysis & Application:

- Apply relevant theories, principles and techniques of policy analysis to identify and assess public policy issues and devise options to resolve them.
- Identify, synthesize, analyze and integrate relevant and appropriate sources of information.

Professionalism, Collaboration, & Leadership

- Demonstrate and apply the ethics and values of public service.
- Develop and complement creative and collaborative approaches to public service leadership



What makes you unique?

- **Why** you chose your particular **academic stream**
- What you've **learned** from your experiences
- An **understanding** of how you will **apply your skills** in the internship
- **Passion** for your field of study
- Your **values** and how they align with the employer's values
- Your **understanding** of **what it will take to be successful** in the internship
- Your **interests** and **activities** and how they align with the internship
- **Insider information** you've gathered from speaking to employers, profs, recruiters etc.

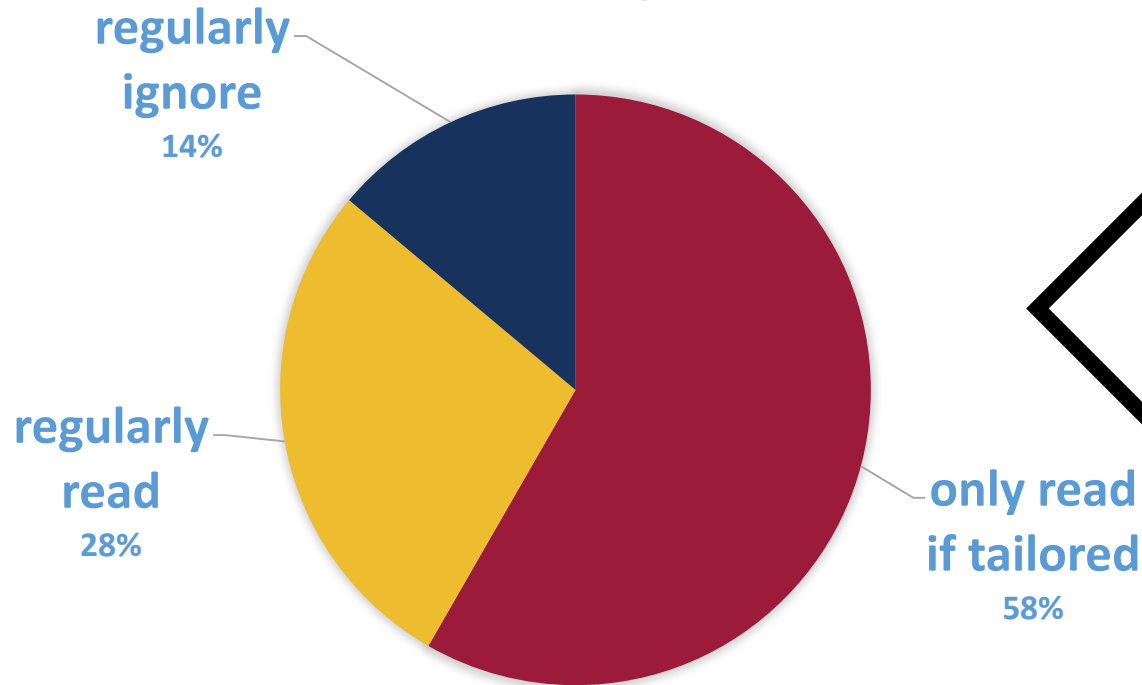


2 - KNOW THE COMPANY

- 70% of recruiters stated that addressing a letter to the appropriate individual will improve an applicant's chance of getting an interview
 - *But how do I find out who to address it to?*
 - *What if I can't find out who to address it to?*
- Even if an employer does not ask for a cover letter, it is a good practice to write one

3 - EXPLAIN THE FIT

DO YOU REGULARLY READ COVER LETTERS?



If your application does not look tailored, **OVER HALF** of hiring managers are glancing over it!

Format

- Header – contact information
- Employer Information
- Subject Line
- Greeting
- White Space

Dr. Adam Jobseeker

16400 Main Ave., Apt. 2745
Miami Beach, FL 33333
(305) 555-5555
ajobseeker@aol.com

February 10, 2007

Hiring Agent Name, Title
Company Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear Hiring Manager:

I am writing to you because I believe my experience, expertise, and ability in the areas of **Crano-Facial Surgery**, as well as my medical skills, uniquely qualify me for a Fellowship position at your hospital. I have over five years of experience in crano-facial surgery, both as a surgeon and an instructor. Now I would like to develop my skills even further, and in the process provide your hospital with the benefits of my background in this specialized field of plastic surgery.

My training, education, and experience in both Mexico and Colombia has provided me with a strong background in the field of crano-facial surgery. I am a founding member of the School for Plastic Surgery at the prestigious Hospital y Universidad de Valle in Colombia, where I am a Professor on staff, providing instruction in crano-facial surgery to members of the resident program. In addition, I have founded and operate my own personal clinic, specializing in crano-facial surgery. I possess degrees in medicine, plastic surgery, and crano-facial surgery from Mexico and Colombia, and have studied under several internationally-renowned plastic surgeons. My work in this field has been recognized by the government of Colombia.

I am looking to complete the one aspect of my education that will allow me to practice crano-facial surgery in the United States. My interest lies in learning all I can in this field, so that I can utilize this knowledge, together with my existing skills, in order to provide the best treatment possible for crano-facial surgery patients, and to help the field move forward into the new century. What I would bring to your hospital is a proven commitment to first-rate health care, excellent treatment skills, and the desire to continually improve.

The accompanying résumé can serve to provide you with greater details of my background and what I have to offer.

I will call your office in a few days to inquire about the possibility of a meeting.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Outline

- Introduction

- Why are you writing? (Subject)
- Catch their attention
- MEng Industrial Internship Program

- The Research Piece

- Show you know what they do
- Show that what they do matters to you
- Why you? Why them?

- The Match & Complementary Skills

- Show how your skills and attributes match their needs

- Conclusion

- Call to action



Can be 1 or 2 paragraphs



Can be 1 or 2 paragraphs



Example: **Introduction**

The health policy courses and the project I have undertaken in my Master of Public Administration degree have provided me ample opportunities to develop my knowledge and experience in health policy in general, and wait times and patient satisfaction in particular. I hope to now contribute these skills to the position of Assistant, Planning & Communications at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.



Example:

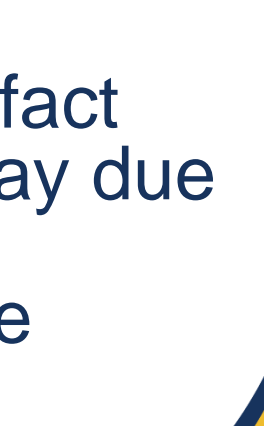
Why this work?

Being a very enthusiastic person about military and defence policy and a long-term reader of aerospace publications, I find Boeing to be intriguing and filled with potential for a developing policy maker such as myself. I am very enthusiastic about military strategy with sound knowledge of defence concepts, including the new Joint Strike Fighter being developed by Boeing and the Department of National Defence. I have particular interest in the development of long-term sustainability and funding in our programs after seeing several programs covering this field. I hope to one day be a part of future Canadian military advances.



Example: **Making the match**

Based on my effectiveness in leading short-term project-based groups, last summer I was selected to head up a six-person student team. In addition to organizing the logistics of getting our team to a remote location, I dealt with the challenges of language barrier (our clients were mostly Spanish-speaking), harsh climate and the fact that there was a major evacuation underway due to forest fires. Despite these barriers, our sustainability initiatives received favourable industry and media attention.





Example: **Complementary Skills**

I was also able to perfect my ability to translate complex issues into customer-friendly terms when I worked at the returns desk at my local Best Buy store. As the customer contact person, it was essential that I understood problems clients were experiencing and then talk them through possible solutions. I deepened my knowledge by finding new ways of explaining the issues to our clients and coming up with the most efficient strategies or products to handle their particular problem.



Example: **Call to action**

Thank you for taking the time to review my application. I know that my experiences and qualifications would allow me to be an asset to your department. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to your goals.



A reminder to watch the details...

Death by clerical error...

“The Govt of Ontario is the place I have wanted to work since I was a child. I would be thrilled to start my career in this co-op position with such a progressive organization as the City of Toronto.”

When spell check is not enough...

“Instrumental in ruining entire operation for a Midwest chain operation.”

Cover Letter: Final Tips

For every sentence in your cover letter, ask yourself:

Am I drawing obvious connections between my story and the role they are trying to fill?

- Read job ads carefully – look for hiring manager name or department supervisors
- Can use **Re: (job position/job number)**
- Use LinkedIn or call the company to find names of hiring managers and recruiters
- Include job # if requested
- Attachments – save carefully, check file names, preview
- Get someone to proofread your cover letter!



Evidence of Success...





Questions?





Tailoring each application

- Decide on target work(s) (be quite specific to role)
- Brainstorm wish list of skills/qualifications (or consult resources)
- Tailor & Target Summary of Skills/Objective
- Tailor & Target Introduction & Research in Cover Letter
- Decide on most relevant experiences in application
- Function before Form! - Re-group, move around, and re-format



Policy Analyst Recruitment and Development Program (PARDP)

- You must meet all essential qualifications in order to be appointed to the position.
- Other qualifications may be a deciding factor in choosing the person to be appointed. Some essential and other qualifications will be assessed through your application.
- It is your responsibility to provide appropriate examples that illustrate how you meet each qualification. Failing to do so could result in your application being rejected

Policy Analyst Recruitment and Development Program (PARDP)

In order to be considered, your application must clearly explain how you meet the following (essential qualifications)

- EDUCATION:

A) Graduation with a Master's Degree or PhD from a recognized post-secondary institution that will be completed* no later than December 31, 2020, with a combination of three half undergraduate or graduate courses in economics, sociology or statistics.

B) Academic excellence: you must have kept a grade point average of at least 75% or B+ during your studies.

Policy Analyst Recruitment and Development Program (PARDP)

- **EXPERIENCE:**

Recent experience conducting research and analysis or conducting statistical or quantitative economic analysis (academic experience is acceptable).*

** Recent is defined as experience gained within the last three (3) years.*

Leadership experience demonstrated through volunteer work, extra-curricular activities or employment that involves a continuing commitment or effort or significant achievement outside your studies. Show us how you launched an initiative, played a key role in an effort you believed in, or motivated others to give the best of themselves.



Evaluate the Fit

The Job Activities & Tasks	My Activities & Skills demonstrated
Strong organizational skills	Conference committee – creating and tracking timeline, delegating and prioritizing tasks...



Your Turn!

- Ask Questions you are still wondering about –
 - Specific questions about your resume
 - other people are probably thinking the same thing!
- The only stupid questions are the one's not asked!

