

# resource library

four: resume & cover letter writing essentials

# resume & cover letter writing

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# resume writing tips

**Résumés should be one page unless you are creating a CV for research careers. You do not have to state everything you have done on a résumé, but everything you state must be true.**

**Generally speaking, after freshman year, high school experiences should not appear on your résumé.**

## style

- Your name should be the first thing on your résumé in large, bold type (approx. font size 18-20), followed by your address (e.g. street address, city/state, zip), phone number (with professional voice mail), and email (school or a professional personal e-mail address).
- Make sure there are no typing, spelling or grammar errors. Have someone review your résumé.
- Be consistent. For example, if your headings are in bold and italicized type, all headings should be in bold and/or italicized. If you use four digits for the year (e.g. 2008), then use that format everywhere.
- Leave plenty of white space on your résumé – don't make your résumé look crowded.
- Leave blank space between the separate sections and items on your résumé.
- Use a font size 11-12. Arial, Times New Roman, Garamond, Cambria, Calibri, Helvetica, Georgia, or Book Antiqua fonts tend to be preferred and are recommended.
- Balance your résumé on the page, leaving margins of approximately 1 inch or .7. Use "tabs" in Microsoft Word so that each position and/or location line up on the page. Do not use the spacebar for this purpose.
- If mailing or presenting a résumé, print résumé on résumé paper and use a résumé envelope. These can be purchased at office supply stores.
- Consider e-mailing your résumé in Adobe PDF format (unless instructed not to do so) – so that the résumé format appears as intended - and as a Microsoft Word document. Different versions of Microsoft Word or a Mac to PC conversion might change the formatting or result in an extra page.
- Be sure to save the résumé with your name in the attachment file name. For example, Jane.Doe.Resume.pdf or Jane.Doe.Coverletter.pdf. When employers receive several résumés with the file name "resume.doc," it can be for them to find the file later. Set up different folders on your computer for each company/program you have applied to. Be careful to send the right résumé to the right organization.

## education

***This should be the first item on the résumé, after your name and contact information, while you are a current student.***

- Name of School (e.g. Macaulay Honors College at Brooklyn College or Macaulay Honors College at The City College of New York/CUNY)
- City and State
- Expected Degree, Major, and Expected Graduation Date (e.g. Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, June 2018)
- GPA

## honors & awards

***Include any honors or awards with dates. After freshman year, focus on college-level honors.***

- All students should include "University Macaulay Scholar (four year merit scholarship to Macaulay Honors College)"

## leadership

*Most recent/current activities should be at the top in chronological order.*

Include leadership experiences on your campus and/or at Macaulay with dates, title (if any), name of organization, and city/state. Some students choose not to list the actual tasks. However, this can be helpful if (1) you need to fill up space on your résumé; (2) there were significant accomplishments; and/or (3) the work is related to the position you are pursuing.

## activities

### **Volunteer Experience:**

*Most recent/current activities should be at the top on chronological order.*

Include recent volunteer experiences with dates, title (if any), name of organization, and city/state. Some students choose not to list the actual tasks. However, this can be helpful if (1) you need to fill up space on your résumé; (2) there were significant accomplishments; and/or (3) the work is related to the position you are pursuing.

*Each experience (i.e. job, internship, assistantship, volunteer, or activity) should include:*

- Dates of involvement in chronological order (e.g. 05/10-Present or 11/13-12/4)
- City and State
- Title (e.g. Office Assistant or Treasurer)
- Name of Organization
- List of responsibilities and accomplishments

### **Describing internship/job/volunteer or leadership task:**

- Do not use first person (“I”).
- Do not use abbreviations that are not commonly known (DDUEE Scholarship Recipient).
- Start each description with an action word. Use present tense verbs when referring to current activities. Use past tense verbs when referring to past activities.
- Avoid listing tasks and instead focus on accomplishments and overall purpose of work (e.g. “Answered phone calls from constituents” VERSUS “Resolved complaints for 100 constituents a week on issues such as sanitation and tree removals, contributing to the Councilmember’s efforts to support community health and safety.”)
- Use numbers, where appropriate, to show the scope of your responsibilities (see example above).
- Include any recognition you have received (e.g. “new procedure recognized by Executive Director as...”).

## skills

- Software (specify which Microsoft Office programs you are skilled in, if it’s a short list; if it includes almost all Microsoft Office programs, then just list Microsoft Office and not each program individually).
- Languages other than English with fluency, specify written/spoken (e.g. Basic Conversational Spanish or Fluent in French)

## other sections

- Objectives are not necessary generally. Do not list an objective unless you have a very specific idea of something you would like to do and are sending it to a contact for networking purposes. For example, if you are applying for a job in an accounting firm, having an obvious objective—“To obtain a position in an accounting firm”— is unnecessary.
- Do not put names of references on your resume and do not write “References Available Upon Request” on your resume (this is a given). When requested, references are listed on a separate document.
- Do not use a picture, and do not include personal information such as height, weight, health status, marital status, nationality, age, religion, race, or social security number.

Questions? Please contact [internships@mhc.cuny.edu](mailto:internships@mhc.cuny.edu)

# resume template

download  
here

**JOHN M. DOE**

PO Box 440612 • Ocean City, MD 12345  
(877) 875.7706 • [johndoe@macaulay.cuny.edu](mailto:johndoe@macaulay.cuny.edu)

## EDUCATION

**Macaulay Honors College at John Jay College of Criminal Justice/CUNY**

**New York, NY**

*Bachelor of Science, Public Administration*

*May 2016*

- Minor: Mathematics
- Cumulative GPA: 3.5 (if 3.0 or above)

## RELEVANT COURSEWORK

- Insert Course Name (not number)
- Tailor to your field and position
- Upper level courses (not intro courses)

## HONORS & AWARDS

University Scholar (four year merit scholarship to Macaulay Honors College)

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Macaulay Research Assistantship Program, Macaulay Honors College**

**New York, NY**

*Research Assistant*

*May 2014 – Present*

- Describe activities, skills and achievements
- Always start these descriptions with action verbs, e.g. “Coordinate,” “Assist,” “Increase,” etc.
- The more detail the better! It is important to highlight transferrable skills.

### Organization/Company

**City, State**

*Position/Title*

*Month Year – Month Year*

- Describe activities, skills and achievements
- Always start these descriptions with action verbs, e.g. “Provide,” “Promote,” “Strengthen,” etc.
- The more detail the better! It is important to highlight transferrable skills.

### Organization/Company

**City, State**

*Position/Title*

*Month Year – Month Year*

- Describe activities, skills and achievements
- Always start these descriptions with action verbs, e.g. “Organize,” “Deliver,” “Establish,” etc.
- The more detail the better! It is important to highlight transferrable skills.

**[ADDITIONAL] EXPERIENCE** (Insert less-related volunteer or leadership experience - student organization/membership roles. Remember: transferrable skills)

### Organization/Company

**City, State**

*Position/Title*

*Month Year – Month Year*

- Describe activities, skills and achievements
- Always start these descriptions with action verbs, e.g. “Design,” “Create,” “Collaborate,” etc.
- The more detail the better! It is important to highlight transferrable skills.

### Organization/Company

**City, State**

*Position/Title*

*Month Year – Month Year*

- Describe activities, skills and achievements
- Always start these descriptions with action verbs, e.g. “Liaise,” “Contribute,” “Compile,” etc.
- The more detail the better! It is important to highlight transferrable skills.

## SKILLS

Insert computer skills and additional languages

# sample graphic design resume

craft a graphic design resume that showcases your design style and brand



MACAULAY  
SEPTOPUS

✉ m\_septopus@mail.com

☎ (123) 456-7890

🖱 helloseptopus.com

## SKILLS

Photoshop	● ● ● ● ●
Illustrator	● ● ● ● ○
InDesign	● ● ● ● ●
After Effects	● ● ● ● ○
Lightroom	● ● ● ○ ○
Dreamweaver	● ● ● ○ ○
HTML/CSS	● ● ● ● ○
Javascript	● ● ● ○ ○

## EDUCATION

**Graphic Design, Macaulay Honors College at Hunter College**  
GPA: 4.0 | Exp Graduation: May 2018  
Awards: Dean's Scholarship, Design Departmental Award

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### User Experience Designer, XYZ Company

May 2016 - Present / San Francisco, CA

- Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit
- Morbi fringilla, eros faucibus rhoncus imperdiet, eros purus mattis odio, sed tincidunt lorem metus vitae libero.
- Aenean ut vulputate felis, sit amet elementum erat. Nullam non maximus eros. Quisque ac ligula massa.

### Branding Intern, Design Agency NYC

Jun 2015 - May 2016 / New York, NY

- Suspendisse sit amet metus augue; donec malesuada fermentum consectetur
- Donec volutpat arcu mi, in egestas dui pellentesque ac; sed vitae neque faucibus, dapibus lacus eget, pellentesque sem
- Nulla eget ex at nisi tempus iaculis. Proin tincidunt mollis

### Digital Media Intern, Media Lab, Inc.

Sep 2014 - Apr 2015 / New York, NY

- Pellentesque varius, est vitae consectetur pulvinar, nulla ligula porttitor neque, ut commodo elit lectus vel odio
- Proin hendrerit tincidunt ultricies nunc sed leo sagittis nisi
- Aliquam erat volutpat; nam faucibus sapien et erat dictum, nec dictum turpis porttitor

## LEADERSHIP & COMMUNITY

### Graphic Designer, Macaulay Business Club

Sept 2015 - Present / New York, NY

- Phasellus id risus malesuada, rutrum metus quis, interdum
- Praesent nec ultrices orci, ullam dictum condimentum vehicula
- Diam et sem dignissim eleifen; liquam aliquam dapibus tellus, at ornare purus fringilla eu




### Volunteer Instructor, Learning Academy

Jun 2015 - Aug 2015 / Bayside, NY

- Phasellus id risus malesuada, rutrum metus quis, interdum
- Praesent nec ultrices orci, ullam dictum condimentum vehicula
- Diam et sem dignissim eleifen; liquam aliquam dapibus tellus, at ornare purus fringilla eu

# sample technical resume

download  
here

<b>MACAULAY SEPTOPUS</b>	 septopus.me  SeptopusM  m_septopus@mail.com
<b>EDUCATION</b>	
<b>Macaulay Honors College at The City College of New York</b> Bachelor of Science in Computer Science Engineering • Macaulay Scholar (Four-Year Merit Scholarship to Macaulay Honors College)	<b>May 2018</b> GPA: 4.0
<b>TECHNICAL SKILLS</b>	
<b>Programming:</b> Java, Python, Ruby, C++ <b>Web Development:</b> HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Ruby on Rails, MySQL, PHP <b>Platforms:</b> Windows, Mac OS, Linux, Android, iOS	
<b>TECHNICAL PROJECTS</b>	
<b>Tic Tac Toe Supreme iOS App</b> • Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sit amet elementum erat. Nullam non maximus eros.	<b>Apr 2016</b>
<b>Photo Analyzer Website</b> • Donec volutpat arcu mi, in egestas dui pellentesque ac; sed vitae neque faucibus, dapibus lacus ege.	<b>Oct 2015</b>
<b>EXPERIENCE</b>	
<b>Junior Developer</b> <b>XYZ Company</b> • Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit • Morbi fringilla, eros faucibus rhoncus imperdiet, eros purus mattis odio, sed tincidunt lorem metus vitae libero. Sit amet elementum erat. Nullam non maximus eros. • Aenean ut vulputate felis, sit amet elementum erat. Nullam non maximus eros. Quisque ac ligula massa.	<b>May 2016 – Present</b> San Francisco, CA
<b>Software Developer Intern</b> <b>Tech NYC</b> • Suspendisse sit amet metus augue; donec malesuada fermentum consectetur • Donec volutpat arcu mi, in egestas dui pellentesque ac; sed vitae neque faucibus, dapibus lacus eget, • Nulla eget ex at nisi tempus iaculis. Proin ncidunt mollis	<b>Jun 2015 – May 2016</b> New York, NY
<b>Mobile App Developer Intern</b> <b>App Labs, Inc.</b> • Pellentesque varius, est vitae consectetur pulvinar, nulla ligula por tor neque, ut commodo elit lectus vel odio • Proin hendrerit ncidunt ultricies nunc sed leo sagi s nisi • Aliquam erat volutpat; nam faucibus sapien et erat dictum, nec dictum turpis por tor	<b>Sep 2014 – Apr 2015</b> New York, NY
<b>LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES</b>	
<b>Cyber Security Club</b> <b>President</b> • Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sit amet elementum erat. Nullam non maximus eros. • Suspendisse sit amet metus augue; donec malesuada fermentum consectetur	<b>Aug 2016 – Present</b>
<b>Vice President</b> • Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sit amet elementum erat. Nullam non maximus eros.	<b>Aug 2015 – May 2016</b>
<b>Robotics Team, Alumni Mentor</b> • Donec volutpat arcu mi, in egestas dui pellentesque ac; sed vitae neque faucibus, dapibus lacus ege. • Aliquam erat volutpat; nam faucibus sapien et erat dictum, nec dictum turpis por tor	<b>Oct 2015</b>

# cover letter writing tips

The cover letter should be tailored and personalized to express your interest to each position you apply to.

## remember

### Remember:

- Make sure that it is concise and to the point. A cover letter is not a personal statement or essay. It should only contain 3-4 paragraphs.
- How are you the best fit for the position? Although you may have many remarkable skills, if you do not specifically target the skills the position requires, you will not be able to demonstrate how you are the best fit for the position.
- Mirror the job post language and industry terms in both your résumé and your cover letter.
- Use both academic and internships/research experience, as well as volunteer and activities, to describe the skills that qualify you for the position.

## top 5 cover letter tips

### Top 5 Cover Letter Tips:

- The header of the cover letter should match the one you use in your résumé.
- Include the name and title of the person receiving your application, the company name, address, and the date.
- If you do not know the name of the person receiving your application, find out by calling or looking online.
- It demonstrates that you did your homework.
- Include your cover letter and resume as attachments and in the body of the application e-mail.

Questions? Please contact [internships@mhc.cuny.edu](mailto:internships@mhc.cuny.edu)



# cover letter template

download  
here

**JOHN M. DOE**

PO Box 440612 • Ocean City, MD 12345  
(877) 875.7706 • [johndoe@macaulay.cuny.edu](mailto: johndoe@macaulay.cuny.edu)

Date

Name of Hiring Manager

Title

Name of Company

Address

City, State ZIP

Dear Ms. / Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ [and/or Hiring Manager and/or Internship Coordinator],

*FIRST PARAGRAPH (Note: the following paragraphs do not need to be double spaced)*

The first paragraph of your letter should state your interest in obtaining the job/internship position at the company/organization [the reason why you are writing and the position you are applying for]. Include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one. Identify 2-3 skills listed in the post that qualify you as an excellent fit. ["I am very interested in this position, and as you will see from my enclosed resume, I have the education, skills and experience to meet the position's requirements."] Be clear and concise.

*SECOND PARAGRAPH*

The next section of your cover letter should describe what you have to offer and why you are the perfect candidate for the role. Make strong connections between your abilities and their needs. Provide concrete examples of how you have demonstrated the abovementioned skills by using relevant work experience. Remember you are interpreting your résumé, not repeating it. Devote 1-2 sentences per skill. [Insert skill 1 from job post → relevant experience using skill 1. Insert skill 2 from job post → relevant experience using skill 2. Insert skill 3 from job post → relevant experience using skill 3].

*THIRD PARAGRAPH*

Highlight something unique/positive about the company/organization. Seek out brand-specific information from its website or trusted periodicals. Look to the mission and/or vision of the company/organization. This will also prepare you for the interview when the time comes! The more knowledge of the employer you can demonstrate, the more invested in the position you seem.

*CLOSING PARAGRAPH*

Indicate that you have enclosed your résumé for their review, emphasizing again that they will see on your résumé that you meet the qualifications for the position. Lastly, indicate that you look forward to the opportunity to meet with them to discuss your qualifications and how you can contribute to their company/organization.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Leave four spaces for a signature, in case they request a hard copy]

John M. Doe

Enclosure

# using action verbs

## list of action verbs for resumes & professional profiles

### management/ leadership skills

administered	converted	generated	managed	reorganized
analyzed	coordinated	handled	merged	replaced
appointed	decided	headed	motivated	restored
approved	delegated	hired	organized	reviewed
assigned	developed	hosted	originated	scheduled
attained	directed	improved	overhauled	streamlined
authorized	eliminated	incorporated	oversaw	strengthened
chaired	emphasized	increased	planned	supervised
considered	enforced	initiated	presided	terminate
consolidated	enhanced	inspected	prioritized	
contracted	established	instituted	produced	
controlled	executed	led	recommended	

### communication/ people skills

addressed	conveyed	expressed	mediated	reinforced
advertised	convinced	formulated	moderated	reported
arbitrated	corresponded	furnished	negotiated	resolved
arranged	debated	incorporated	observed	responded
articulated	defined	influenced	outlined	solicited
authored	described	interacted	participated	specified
clarified	developed	interpreted	persuaded	spoke
collaborated	directed	interviewed	presented	suggested
communicated	discussed	involved	promoted	summarized
composed	drafted	joined	proposed	synthesized
condensed	edited	judged	publicized	translated
conferred	elicited	lectured	reconciled	wrote
consulted	enlisted	listened	recruited	
contacted	explained	marketed	referred	

### research skills

analyzed	diagnosed	gathered	located	surveyed
clarified	evaluated	identified	measured	systematized
collected	examined	inspected	organized	tested
compared	experimented	interpreted	researched	
conducted	explored	interviewed	searched	
critiqued	extracted	invented	solved	
detected	formulated	investigated	summarized	
determined				

### technical skills

adapted	converted	fortified	rectified	specialized
assembled	debugged	installed	regulated	standardized
built	designed	maintained	remodeled	studied
calculated	determined	operated	repaired	upgraded
computed	developed	overhauled	replaced	utilized
conserved	engineered	printed	restored	
constructed	fabricated	programmed	solved	

## teaching skills

adapted	coordinated	explained	instilled	stimulated
advised	critiqued	facilitated	instructed	taught
clarified	developed	focused	motivated	tested
coached	enabled	guided	persuaded	trained
communicated	encouraged	individualized	set goals	transmitted
conducted	evaluated	informed	simulated	tutored

## financial/data skills

administered	developed	creative skills	drew	modified
adjusted	estimated	acted	entertained	originated
allocated	forecasted	adapted	established	performed
analyzed	managed	began	fashioned	photographed
appraised	marketed	combined	formulated	planned
assessed	measured	conceptualized	founded	revised
audited	planned	condensed	illustrated	revitalized
balanced	programmed	created	initiated	shaped
calculated	projected	customized	instituted	solved
computed	reconciled	designed	integrated	
conserved	reduced	developed	introduced	
corrected	researched	directed	invented	
determined	retrieved	displayed	modeled	

## helping skills

adapted	clarified	educated	helped	resolved
advocated	coached	encouraged	insured	simplified
aided	collaborated	ensured	intervened	supplied
answered	contributed	expedited	motivated	supported
arranged	cooperated	facilitated	provided	volunteered
assessed	counseled	familiarize	referred	
assisted	demonstrated	furthered	rehabilitated	
cared for	diagnosed	guided	presented	

## organization/detail skills

approved	distributed	obtained	reserved	systematized
arranged	executed	operated	responded	updated
cataloged	filed	ordered	reviewed	validated
categorized	generated	organized	routed	verified
charted	implemented	prepared	scheduled	
classified	incorporated	processed	screened	
coded	inspected	provided	set up	
collected	logged	purchased	submitted	
compiled	maintained	recorded	supplied	
corresponded	monitored	registered	standardized	

## more verbs for accomplishments

achieved	exceeded	reduced (losses)	spearheaded	transformed
completed	improved	resolved (issues)	succeeded	won
expanded	pioneered	restored	surpassed	

# indicating your macaulay education

resumes & linkedin

on your resume

Example 1

EDUCATION	
Macaulay Honors College at City College/CUNY, New York, NY Bachelor of Arts, Art History and Philosophy, Minor: Asian Studies Cumulative GPA: 4.0	June 2017

Example 2



EDUCATION	
Macaulay Honors College at Hunter College, New York, NY Bachelor of Arts: Political Science, (Minor) Human Rights Cumulative GPA: 4.0	June 2016
Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Buenos Aires, Argentina (Study Abroad) Earned 6 Credits in Spanish and Human Rights	January 2014

Example 3

EDUCATION	Macaulay Honors College of Hunter College (CUNY) - New York, NY
	May 2014 Major: English Literature GPA: 3.8 Minor: Art History

on linkedin

Example

 Education	
<b>Macaulay Honors College at The City University of New York</b> Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Economics, Political Science; Public Policy Certificate Recipient (Concentration: Economic Policy) 2011 – 2015 Honors college at City University of New York. ▶ 1 honor or award	
<b>City University of New York-Hunter College</b> Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Economics, Political Science; Public Policy Certificate Recipient (Concentration: Economic Policy) 2011 – 2015 Activities and Societies: <a href="#">Hawkappella</a> , <a href="#">Circle K International</a> , <a href="#">Macaulay Honors College</a> ▶ 2 honors and awards	