



# Resume and Cover Letter Writing

414.288.7423 ■ [career.services@marquette.edu](mailto:career.services@marquette.edu) ■ [www.marquette.edu/csc](http://www.marquette.edu/csc) ■ Holthusen Hall, 1st floor

## Know yourself: Know your skills

### Basic Information

- ◇ Your name as you want to be referred to professionally (Jon Baker, Jonathon Baker, Jon E. Baker).
- ◇ Current address and phone number with area code (where you can be reached now!).
- ◇ Permanent address and phone number with area code (if you will be in different locations during your search, an address of someone who will always know how to reach you. This could be a family address).
- ◇ If you use e-mail, include your address.

### Objective

A clear objective is critical to resume development because it helps focus and select information. Although you may wish to make your objective broad, do not make it so broad that it says nothing. If you are pursuing employment in more than one field, simply create different objectives for each field.

Your career objective should answer this question, "What do I want to do?" Is it for graduate school, a part-time job, an internship, a professional position after graduation, a scholarship? Make sure your objective makes this clear.

### Some sample objectives are:

1. Research position in biochemical laboratory
2. Position teaching science or social studies at the secondary school level
3. Editorial or research assistant in a public affairs organization
4. Acceptance to College Student Personnel Administration graduate program
5. Internship position to explore career options in the health field
6. Summer job in the field of physical therapy

### Educational Background (for each degree-conferring institution)

- ◇ Institution
- ◇ City, State
- ◇ Graduation date
- ◇ Degree or certification obtained
- ◇ Major/Minor/ emphasis area
- ◇ Any areas of Concentration
- ◇ GPA (if proud of it)
- ◇ Additional certification or licensure
- ◇ Relevant coursework
- ◇ Specialized instruction

## Experience

This part of your resume may include several sections such as work experience, volunteer experience (internships, community service, student teaching), campus leadership, and any area in which you may have significant experience, such as publications/ presentations or knowledge. You may divide this between Career Related Experience and Other Work Experience.

### Briefly describe for each position:

- 1) Job title, dates, organization name, location
- 2) List your responsibilities for each position using a variety of ACTION WORDS to describe situations and achievements
- 3) Unless necessary, avoid little words in description such as "a", "an", "the."
- 4) Include scope of responsibility such as: *Trained eight student workers*
- 5) Concretely outline any outstanding results such as: *Developed new computerized customer listing using MS Access software to improve output by ten percent*

## Honors/Activities/Leadership/Special Skills

Front load these with those most important or most pertinent to your objective (career goal). You may want to use specific headings such as professional organizations, computer skills, and leadership positions. Include any honors, scholarships or recognition awards that you have received. If you were actively involved in any clubs, teams or committees while in college, those may be included also. The key to this section is keeping it brief. If you feel you need more detail, use the guidelines for Experience and make it a complete section.

## Interests

The trend is to keep away from any extraneous information that does not clearly connect to your career goal. However, if you are applying for a position in which you have experience through a hobby or leisure activity, you may want to consider adding it to your resume. For example, if you are applying for a forest ranger position and you enjoy hiking in the wilderness, include it by stating: Skilled in all-terrain hiking, camping and navigating. What you need to ask yourself is, "Will this information help the potential employer learn more about how well I can do the job?" If your answer is yes, then be sure to include the information.

## Polishing It Up

After you get all your information down on paper, go through and decide which experiences are directly related to your objective, which are definitely not related, and which are questionable. The questionable information can be used only if there is room. Otherwise stick with the directly related experiences.

## Cover Letters

The key to a successful job or graduate school search is to communicate with the person who has the ability to hire or admit. Therefore, your cover letter is extremely important. Effective cover letters convey a sense of purpose, project enthusiasm for the position or program, and demonstrate your knowledge of the employer or graduate program's goals and needs.

Many times individuals will spend hours writing a "perfect" resume and very little time writing a quality cover letter. Remember that your cover letter not only accompanies your resume, it is usually on top of your resume when the envelope is opened. A positive first impression requires that your cover letter be neat and concise, containing no errors in spelling or grammar. Each cover letter should be customized to fit the position for which you are applying.

You will want to customize your cover letter depending on its purpose. Some reasons for sending a cover letter may be:

- ~ A result of a direct search
- ~ A response to an advertisement
- ~ A follow up on a contact made through networking

No matter what your reason for sending a cover letter, be sure it contains the following information:

- ~ Return address with the date
- ~ Name, title, organization, and address of the person you are writing

### First Paragraph

- ~ State purpose of letter
- ~ Catch attention
- ~ Indicate your interest in the position or company
- ~ Flatter your audience by using company/ program information found through research

### Second Paragraph

- ~ Explain how your background makes you a qualified candidate
- ~ Give an example, talk about a specific project, accomplishment, or service
- ~ Highlight information found in the resume

### Third Paragraph

- ~ Refer the reader to your enclosures (resume, reference, examples of work)

### Final Paragraph

- ~ Indicate your intentions for follow-up
- ~ Repeat a number where you may be reached

### Closing

- ~ Salutation
- ~ Signature

## Barbara Brunner

300 Canton Avenue • Waukesha, WI 53188 • (262) 733-4476 • barbara.brunner@marquette.edu

### OBJECTIVE

Seeking a civil engineering position in construction management using communication, analytical and creative problem-solving skills.

### EDUCATION SKILLS

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, Milwaukee, WI

**Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering**, May 20xx

- Competent in use of data collectors, digital and electronic levels
- Experienced with AutoCAD; knowledgeable concerning Prolog manager, Visual Basic, Fortran and MS Office; Internet proficient
- Qualified to perform basic tests on concrete

### EXPERIENCE

6/xx-Present

**Intern, SHENKER AND ASSOCIATES, INC., Milwaukee, WI**

Construction Department

- Inspected daily duties of construction crews
- Conducted concrete air tests and concrete slump tests
- Generated pertinent daily reports for project engineer and assisted other inspectors

Transportation Department

- Prepared bids for projects
- Reviewed final roadway designs and developed project quantities
- Initiated design for water drainage and completed roadway profiles

Survey Department

- Performed topographic surveys, construction staking, construction surveys, and level loops
- Revised data gathered after surveys and operated a variety of instruments

Summer 20xx

**Intern, TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, RICHARDS CONSTRUCTION CO., Milwaukee, WI**

- Drew and revised transportation engineering site plans using MicroStation and AutoCAD
- Performed surveys of construction sites
- Conducted on-site measurements for topographical studies
- Performed inspection of several freeway interchange and bridge rehabilitation projects through direct cooperation with contractors by gaining knowledge of the State of Wisconsin Highway and Structure Specifications Handbook

9/xx-5/xx

**Student Manager, MARQUETTE UNION SPORTS ANNEX, Milwaukee, WI**

- Recruited and interviewed new employees
- Supervised and provided assistance to twelve employees
- Organized weekly social activities and managed complex during absence of owner

### HONORS/ ACTIVITIES

MU Freshman of the Year—1998

American Society of Civil Engineer

Society of Women Engineers

Freshmen Engineering Lab Teaching Assistant

Navy ROTC Scholarship recipient

MU Choir

Volunteer, MU Communities That Care

Volunteer, Waukesha Food Pantry

## Sample Resume • Internship

**Gracie Goodwin**

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PO Box 1881 • Marquette University • Milwaukee, WI 53201 • 414-288-3577 • grace.goodwin@marquette.edu

<b>Objective</b>	A summer research internship in the field of biology	
<b>Education</b>	<b>Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology</b> Minor: English Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI	May 2002 GPA: 3.2/4.0
<b>Computer Skills</b>	MS Office, Adobe Pagemaker on IBM and Macintosh	
<b>Relevant Classes</b>	Principles of Biology, Ecology- Evolution, Microbiology, and Subtropical Ecology	
<b>Lab Skills</b>	Cell fractionation by differential centrifugation, RNA analysis extraction and fractionation, membrane isolation, Lipid extraction techniques	
<b>Career Related Experience</b>	<b>Summer Research Intern</b> , Marshfield Clinic, Marshfield, WI Summer 2003 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learned advanced research techniques under the supervision of a research scientist</li><li>• Contributed to special projects in the laboratory</li></ul> <b>Student Worker and Hall Secretary</b> , Office of Residence Life, Milwaukee, WI August 2002- May 2003 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provided information to current and incoming students, parents and visitors to Milwaukee about Marquette Residence Halls</li><li>• Acted as a liaison between administrators and those with questions about halls</li><li>• Assisted with office tasks, including data entry and mailings</li><li>• Created bulletin board displays providing information to students living in the halls</li></ul> <b>Cashier</b> , Sodex/Marriot Food Services, Milwaukee, WI October 2001 to December 2001 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Handled cash transactions</li><li>• Interacted with customers in a fast paced environment</li><li>• Completed specific tasks within set deadlines</li><li>• Maintained clean working area</li></ul>	
<b>Other Work Experience</b>	<b>Server</b> , Hardees Restaurant, Des Moines, IA, August 2000- May 2001 <b>Cabin Counselor</b> , Cool Camp for Kids, Zion, WY, Summers 1998-2000	
<b>Honors and Activities</b>	Dean's List, Presidential Scholarship, Arts and Entertainment Committee, Intramural field hockey	

Gracie Goodwin

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PO Box 1881 • Marquette University • Milwaukee, WI 53201 • 414-288-3577 • [grace.goodwin@marquette.edu](mailto:grace.goodwin@marquette.edu)

February 6, 20XX

Jonathon Saunders  
Save Our Children  
1212 33rd Street, Suite #1  
Bloomington, DE 80080

Dear Mr. Saunders:

I am writing in reference to the Program Coordinator position (NY-02) listed recently on the AmeriCorps website. This position appeals to me because of my strong interest in service as a career, assisting to create a positive environment for all members of a community. I believe this position would allow me to use the skills I have learned through my internship and psychology program. In turn, I would gain additional skills as I help develop a strong program at Save Our Children. Save Our Children's mission, to serve all children through care, love, and support, describes exactly the kind of environment I am seeking.

In May 20XX, I will graduate from Marquette University with my bachelor of science degree in psychology. Some strengths of mine include being self-motivated, organized, and able to work with a variety of people. As a psychology student, I am often required to do group projects allowing me to be a part of a productive team. I enjoy working with people in order to complete a common goal. My internship as a youth care worker gave me the opportunity to do this with a team of professionals. We often worked in groups to strategize new, more effective ways to work with each client. This team approach taught me to see things from different perspectives while learning new ways to help my clients achieve independence and attain goals. In addition, I am able to successfully maintain a good grade point average while remaining involved as a campus leader. These skills, combined with my educational background in psychology, make me an ideal candidate for this Program Coordinator position.

Enclosed please find a current copy of my resume. If you should have any questions regarding how my skills fit with your organization, please give me a call at 414-288-3577. I may also be reached by e-mail at [grace.goodwin@marquette.edu](mailto:grace.goodwin@marquette.edu). Thank you for considering me for this position. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

*Grace J. Goodwin*

Grace J. Goodwin

## Action Words

Use these Action Words to describe situations and achievements. Use a mix of the words as to avoid repetitiveness.

accentuated  
accomplished  
achieved  
adhered to  
administered  
adopted  
advanced  
applied  
apprehended  
assimilated  
assisted  
assumed  
attained  
authorized  
built  
carried out  
caused  
charted  
checked  
collaborated  
combined  
commanded  
commissioned  
conducted  
constructed  
continued  
contributed  
controlled  
cooperated  
coordinated  
created  
delegated  
demonstrated  
derived  
designated  
designed  
developed  
devised  
directed  
discharged  
dispatched  
displayed  
earned  
effected

emphasized  
employed  
empowered  
enforced  
engineered  
established  
exceeded  
excelled  
exercised  
exerted  
exhibited  
expedited  
featured  
formed  
fulfilled  
generated  
handled  
helped  
implemented  
indicated  
invested  
made  
maintained  
managed  
mapped  
mastered  
merited  
mobilized  
modeled  
negotiated  
obtained  
operated  
organized  
originated  
outlined  
oversaw  
participated  
performed  
persisted  
planned  
pointed out  
pooled  
practiced  
prepared

prevailed  
produced  
programmed  
progressed  
projected  
promoted  
prompted  
proposed  
pursued  
qualified  
regulated  
remained  
represented  
resisted  
resolved  
restored  
resumed  
revealed  
revived  
schemed  
secured  
seized  
shared  
showed  
specialized  
sponsored  
stressed  
succeeded  
supervised  
supported  
surpassed  
sustained  
synchronized  
synthesized  
transacted  
understood  
undertook  
used  
utilized  
ventured  
verified  
withstood