

MMATH/MDSAI RÉSUMÉS AND COVER LETTERS

9/28/2023



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development



Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.



Territorial Acknowledgement

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

September 29, 2023 B.C. Matthews Hall (BMH) Green



[Register through the Office of Indigenous Relations events and resources page](#)

Let's make this a supportive space

Listen and learn from each other with grace

Ask questions throughout the training

Participate in a way that works for you!

Remain respectful of others



Learning Goals

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the different purposes of a résumé and a CV
2. Identify the components of an effective résumé
3. Analyze a job posting to identify the skills and competencies of relevance to an employer
4. Identify and assess transferable skills of relevance for a résumé
5. Articulate transferable skills and accomplishments using action verb statements





WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CV AND A RÉSUMÉ?

Major Differences between a CV and a Résumé

Curriculum Vitae	Résumé
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approx. 3-6 pages for new academic (no page limit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-2 pages approx.***
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on research record	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on employment/experience record
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market publications, grants, scholarships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Market skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight teaching, research and service experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highlight transferable nature of experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curated for departmental needs & types of position (eg research or teaching)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curated to target specific position/ employer needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic/R&D Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry-focused

RÉSUMÉ

The background is a solid yellow color. It features several thick, colorful geometric shapes: a red L-shaped bar in the top-left corner, a light purple L-shaped bar below it, a light purple horizontal bar at the bottom left, a teal horizontal bar at the bottom center, a light purple diagonal bar on the right side, and a blue U-shaped bar on the far right. The text is centered in the upper half of the page.

STEP 1: ANALYZE THE JOB POSTING AND RESEARCH THE COMPANY

A Job Posting Has Appeared!

Quantitative Research Analyst

Primary Responsibilities:

- Develop, modify, optimize, test and implement real time quantitative trading models and strategies.
- Perform statistical analysis of historical and current financial market data.
- Research strategies in equities, futures, fixed income, and other asset classes.

Requirements:

- Masters in Mathematics, or Statistics
- Must possess expert level C/C++ programming skills.
- Incredibly strong problem solving and analytical skills.
- Time series analysis and statistical modeling experience.
- Some financial experience desired but not required.
- Must be a strong self-starter and able to work well independently.



Analyze the Job Posting

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	Employer wants	Evidence /examples you have it
Experience	Time series analysis, statistical modeling	
Education	Masters	
Knowledge	Math, statistics, physics...	
Technical skills	C/C++, statistical analysis...	
Transferable skills	Problem solving, analytical...	
Personal Attributes	Self-starter, work independently	

Research Beyond the Posting



“If we take the degree as a job, then we need to learn how to articulate our time in the degree as time spent *working at a job.*”

Erin Wunker, “Articulating Academic Work Experience in a Non-Academic World,” *Hook & Eye*



**STEP 2:
TRANSLATING ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES INTO NON-
ACADEMIC WORLD**

Translation 101: Research/Course Projects

Reflect:

- What roles did you take up when you were researching or working on a project?
- What did you *do* in your research/project? What were your responsibilities?



Translation 101: Verbs

Passive (Academic) Language	Active Language
Look at/study/examine x	Evaluate/analyze x
Hold office hours	Communicate complex information to non-expert audiences
Run tutorials	Facilitate/lead group meetings
Defend thesis	Led discussion on research findings and methodology with experts in field
Give presentation	Presented research findings interactively (to experts in the field)
Do research	Analyzed data

Translation 101: Transferable Skills

- Communication
- Information Management
- Numeracy
- Critical Thinking/Problem solving
- Positive attitude
- Responsibility
- Adaptability
- Continuous learning mindset
- Teamwork
- Project Management

*“Employability Skills 2000+” Conference Board of Canada

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STEP 3: WRITE A RESUME

How can you make a recruiter's job easier?

- Be concise and **relevant**
- Present a logically organized document
- Edit – no spelling, grammar errors
- Consistency of formatting



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COMPONENTS OF A RÉSUMÉ

Major Sections of a Résumé (not exhaustive!)

- ❖ **Header**
- ❖ **Summary of Qualifications**
- ❖ **Relevant Experience**
- ❖ **Additional Experience**
- ❖ **Selected Projects**
- ❖ **Education**
- ❖ **Professional Development/ Certifications**
- ❖ **Other Categories? Ask me!**



Header



Your Name (can include your pronouns)



Location: optional and can be kept general (e.g., Waterloo, ON)



Contact info: email and phone



Additional profile links: Github, LinkedIn, etc.



Want to include an Objective? These are great for cold-calling or searching for internships that are not advertised!



Header

Example 1:

Johanna Smith

Waterloo, Ontario (519) 1234-5678 jsmith@uwaterloo.ca [LinkedIn](#) [Github](#)

Summary of Qualifications

- Highlight 4 – 6 qualifications that best demonstrate your fit for the job
 - i.e. strengths, achievements, skills
- Outline your unique value
 - “2 years quantitative and qualitative data analysis project experience”
- Reference where and/or how you developed the skill
 - “Excellent communication skills strengthened over two years of experience as a Teaching Assistant”
- Consider using keywords from posting
- Be confident, specific and accurate



Summary of Qualification: Categories of Information

- Relevant experience and/or accomplishments in your field/industry
 - “x years y experience, including project experience in p and q”
- Relevant knowledge/skills/expertise (language, technical, computing)
 - Technical skills
 - Transferable skills
- Relevant personal characteristics and attributes
- Specialized training/education relevant to the objective
- Additional (relevant) information



Summary of Qualifications

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- 2 years of data analysis project experience, including providing innovative solutions to real-world problems
- Enthusiastic individual with a varied academic background in computer science and finance
- Excellent ability to communicate complex ideas effectively to diverse audiences, both orally and in writing strengthened through 2 years of experience as Teaching Assistant
- Awarded second place out of 76 teams in ZYZZ Case Study Competition
- Experienced user of Microsoft Office Suite; over 4 years of experience working with Excel, MATLAB, C++, and SQL

Your (Relevant!) Experience

- Include all **relevant** experience
 - Paid and unpaid
 - Extracurricular activities
- Prioritize sections based on relevance
- Extract transferable skills to use for your bullet points

Experience: Bullet Points

- **WHAT** you did + **HOW** you did it + **WHY** you did it
- Focus on accomplishments/impact of action not duties
- Example bullet:
 - Collaborated to develop a marking rubric ensuring fairness in assessing student learning in Introductory Calculus
- Prioritize
 - Put most relevant point first



Sample bullets

- Participated in development of digital decision support tool

vs.

- Collaboratively built digital decision support tool which helps managers build effective teams through matching team members based on personality metrics

Sample bullets

- Conducted successful pilot study

VS.

- Optimized performance of pilot study teams through ensuring balance of personality traits and required skills

Teaching Assistant: First Draft

- Responsible for marking 50 student assignments three times per term; assisted with marking the midterm and final exams
- Addressed student questions during regular office hours
- Gave lectures on relevant topics

Related Experience

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, Department of Computer Science, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON

Sept 20xx- present

- Communicate complex concepts in a clear, concise manner in addressing student questions during regular office hours and via online message boards and email
- Assess student learning through evaluating 50 assignments three times each term
- Plan and deliver interactive and engaging presentations on algorithm design and abstractions
- Collaborate with professor and fellow teaching assistants to develop a marking rubric ensuring fairness in assessing student learning

Additional Experience

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Greeter (Volunteer), Grand River Hospital Emergency Room, Kitchener, ON

Sept 20xx-present

Sales Associate, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Toronto, ON

Sept 20xx-Sept 20xx

(Selected) Projects

RELEVANT PROJECTS

Streamlining Patient Flow and Reducing Wait Times

Jan-April 20xx

Grand River Hospital Emergency Room

- Collaboratively developed metrics to assess patient flow and waiting times in a busy emergency room
- Consulted with hospital staff to ensure various stakeholder perspectives were incorporated in the project
- Reduced wait times by an average of 45 minutes per patient by developing innovative triage checklist which was subsequently adopted by the hospital

Education

EDUCATION

Candidate for Masters of Math, Computer Science

Sept 20xx- present

University of Waterloo, Waterloo, ON

- **Relevant Courses:** Principles of Data Management, Optimization for Data Science, Data Infrastructures
- **Award:** UWaterloo Graduate Student Award

Bachelor of Science, Math and Computer Science

April 20xx

- University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Professional Development/ Activities and Interests

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fundamentals of University Teaching Certificate

Dec 20xx

Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE), University of Waterloo

Leadership Essentials Certificate

April 20xx

University of Toronto

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Member, Second Place Winning Team, IEXXT Hackathon Competition

Oct 20xx

Participant, Rotary Exchange Program to Nicaragua

May 20xx

Vice-president, U of T Undergraduate Math Student Association

Sept 20xx-April 20xx



Appearance

- 1-2 pages;1 font
- 10-12 size font
- Use consistent margins
- **Format *strategically***
- White space
- Bulleted lists
- Titles on left side; dates on right

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COVER LETTERS

Cover Letter: Best Practices

DO	DON'T
Match the language of field/industry/company whenever possible	Reuse the exact same letter without TAILORING to the specific job
Save your resume and cover letters in one file and send as an attachment when applying via email	Underestimate the importance of the cover letter for an application
Demonstrate your written communication skills as a strength	Submit your cover letter without having it proofread
Make a direct connection between yourself and the organization/role	Include sentences that add no value to your argument



Cover Letter Paragraphs

1. Introduction (Establishes that connection immediately)
2. Body Paragraphs (Grouped by themes: Skills-based, Experience-based, etc)
3. Conclusion (Wraps everything up, maintaining that connection to company)

Main Focus

1. What do I think is most critical to the employer?
2. Where do I have the strongest evidence that I am proud of to support my ability to demonstrate these critical elements?
3. What connections with the employer can I make (values, career goals, mission statements, etc)?

Introductory Paragraph

Consider the following:

- ❖ How would you like to introduce yourself?
- ❖ Why are you interested in this role or what motivated you to apply?
- ❖ Is there something about the organization you're interested in?
- ❖ Why are you the candidate they need to select?

Your Thesis Statement

Template

What is your thesis statement? What are your claims?

My background in _____, my experience with
_____, and my skills in _____ and
_____ make me an ideal candidate.

Example

- » **x** and **y** demonstrate my ability to excel at **c**.
- » My background in **x**, my experience in **y**, and my skills in **a** and **b** make me an excellent candidate for **c**.

WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS EXAMPLE?

Dear Ms. Quraishi,

I am very excited about the possibility of joining the Software Engineering Unit of General Motors in the position of Junior Engineer as advertised on the GM website. Your tradition of innovative automotive engineering design and progressive product development is inspirational to developing professionals like myself.

From careers.yorku.ca

A NARRATIVE APPROACH

Dear Hiring Manager:

My focus on developing and executing analysis-driven online marketing plans enabled my previous employer to enjoy a 25% sales growth in one year. I am excited about the opportunity to do the same for Amazon in the role of Senior Marketing Manager, Sports & Outdoors. From my six informational interviews with current Amazonians, and from what I learned at the Employer Information Session, I believe that I can hit the ground running and immediately deliver results in your fast-paced environment.

From <https://foster.uw.edu>

Body Paragraph(s)

- ❖ Skills-Based Paragraph: Each paragraph focuses on a specific skill, bringing in multiple experiences as evidence.

e.g. Skill 1 + evidence
Skill 2 + evidence
Skill 3 + evidence

- ❖ Experience/Project-based Paragraph: Each paragraph outlines a particular experience that demonstrates multiple skills

e.g. Experience 1 + skills used
Experience 2 + skills used
Experience 3 + skills used

Body Paragraph(s)

Consider the following :

- ❖ What stories will be strongest in proving your suitability for this job?
- ❖ How can you provide evidence, rather than making a list of unsubstantiated claims?
- ❖ How can you incorporate multiple skills of relevance into your examples?
- ❖ How can you make connections between your evidence and the job description to best demonstrate your fit?

Concluding Paragraph

Consider the following questions to ensure your letter is complete:

- ❖ Why are you interested in this line of work/company/role?
- ❖ In summary, what is it that you bring to this position/organization?
- ❖ Discuss application further in an interview
- ❖ Thank you

Reviewing Your Letter

Key considerations:

- ❖ Have you focused your letter on elements that the employer has *asked for*?
- ❖ Did you provide evidence to support your claims?
- ❖ Have you included any facts/skills/experiences that may appear *irrelevant* to the employer?



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WHAT ARE BROADCAST LETTERS?

Key Takeaways for Today

1. A job ad offers clues and ideas of how to make connections to the employer
2. Academic Experiences DO NOT make you “over-qualified” but rather need to be re-framed in employer-friendly terms and key phrases (located in the job ad!)
3. Strategic components of a résumé include Summary of Qualifications and writing effective bullet points can support tailoring and use of keywords
4. Storytelling in cover letters gives you concrete examples & provides opportunities to connect with the employer via interest, values, or career goals
5. Cover letters can’t “cover” everything! Selective focus and careful organization give depth and evidence that your resume can’t really provide
6. Documents should work together to make the most effective argument possible for your candidacy

Additional Supports

- Individual appointments and drop-in sessions
- Other workshops
- Employer Information Sessions
- Various speaker panels
- Career and Job Fairs (September & February)



Register online at
<https://waterlooworks.uwaterloo.ca>



Questions?

Visit us!

Centre for Career Development

Tatham Centre uwaterloo.ca/career-action

careerhub.uwaterloo.ca

519-888-4047



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