

THANK YOU FOR JOINING

We will start shortly.



Employee Tears
@EmployeeTears



Good morning to everyone except the companies that require applicants to upload their resumes and subsequently ask them to complete a form entering the exact same information.



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

Centre for Career
Development

STORYTELLING AND ARTICULATING SKILLS IN YOUR RÉSUMÉ AND COVER LETTER

Poojitha Durgamahanti (she/her)

Career Leader, Centre for
Career Development

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Career Leader, Centre for
Career Development



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Today's Facilitators



Candice (she/her)
Workshop Facilitator



Poojitha (she/her)
Workshop Facilitator



THIS
workshop **IS A**
SAFE
SPACE

We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabeg, 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.

- Find out about UWaterloo Indigenous initiatives, events, and news through the Office of Indigenous relations:
<https://uwaterloo.ca/indigenous>
- Learn more about the land on which you live and work on: <https://native-land.ca/> or <https://www.whose.land/en/>

Let's make this a safer space

Listen and learn from each other with respect

Participate in a way that works for you!

Make no assumptions

Remain respectful of others – we do not tolerate harmful behaviour in this space



Learning Goals

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

1. Analyze a job posting to identify the skills and competencies of relevance to an employer and what is important to you
2. Understand the components of an effective résumé, and how they can be strategically arranged to be persuasive
3. Identify and articulate relevant skills and experiences for a résumé and cover letter
4. Implement action verb statements in resumes and unified organization in cover letters



A Job Posting Has Appeared!

- 1) What does the job ad reveal about the company?

Is there anything that interests me about the description? Do I share values?

- 2) What are the requirements for this job?

Which requirements reflect my unique & strongest qualifications within the role?

- 3) What are the responsibilities listed in this job ad?

Have I done something similar in work, volunteer, school, or hobbies?

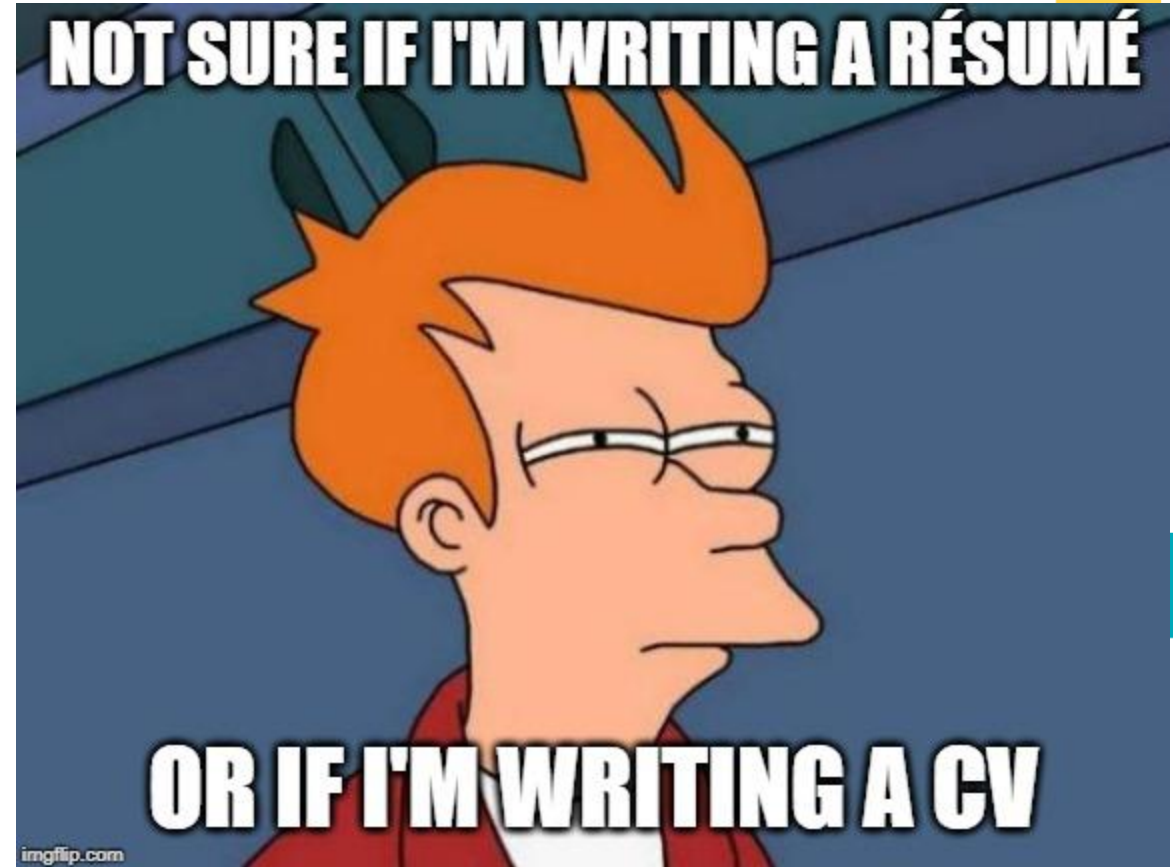


Research Beyond the Posting



Google News

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CV AND A RÉSUMÉ?



Curriculum Vitae

- Approx. 3-6 pages for new academic (no page limit)
- Focus on research record
- Market publications, grants, scholarships
- Highlight teaching, research and service experiences
- Curated for departmental needs & types of position (eg research or teaching)
- Inventory of achievement
- Academic/R&D Positions

Résumé

- 1-2 pages approx.***
- Focus on employment/experience record
- Market skills
- Highlight transferable nature of experiences
- Curated to target specific position/employer needs
- Industry-focused

***Unsure of the preferred length? You can always check the HR website or contact HR via email for this info!

The background is a solid bright yellow. On the left side, there is a red L-shaped bar at the top, a light purple L-shaped bar below it, and a light purple horizontal bar at the bottom. A teal horizontal bar is positioned below the light purple horizontal bar. On the right side, there is a thick blue vertical bar that curves at the bottom. A light purple diagonal bar crosses the teal bar and extends towards the top right. The text "TRANSLATING ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES" is centered in the middle of the page in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

TRANSLATING ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

“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*



Translation 101: Research/Course Projects

Reflect on and jot down:

- 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?

*keep these handy as we'll use them later for a bullet point writing exercise!



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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	...



Research-related Statements

- Defended my thesis

VS.

- Presented research results and justified my methodological approaches through engaging in a discussion with experts in the field

Teaching-related Statements

- Conducted successful tutorial sessions

VS.

- Facilitated engaging group discussions by ensuring group members felt heard and their opinions were valued

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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
- ❖ Technical Skills
- ❖ Professional Development/ Certifications
- ❖ Other Categories? Ask me!



We will focus on these Major Sections of a Résumé

- ❖ **Header**
- ❖ **Summary of Qualifications**
- ❖ **Relevant Experience**
- ❖ **Additional Experience**
- ❖ **Selected Projects**
- ❖ **Education**
- ❖ **Technical Skills**
- ❖ **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!



Summary of Qualifications



HIGHLIGHT 4 – 6
QUALIFICATIONS
THAT BEST
DEMONSTRATE
YOUR STRENGTHS



OUTLINE YOUR
UNIQUE VALUE



REFERENCE
WHERE AND/OR
HOW YOU
DEVELOPED
THE SKILL



STRONGLY
RECOMMEND
USING
KEYWORDS
FROM POSTING



BE CONFIDENT
AND ACCURATE



(1st Draft) Summary of Qualifications

- ❖ Background in political science and global governance
- ❖ Excellent interpersonal skills
- ❖ Ability to write reports and give presentations
- ❖ Completed data analysis as part of thesis project

Revised Summary of Qualifications

- ❖ 2+ years research experience in global affairs with a specialization in political conflict and migration
- ❖ Strong qualitative and quantitative data analysis skills with a proven ability to identify trends
- ❖ Excellent written and oral communication skills as demonstrated by policy report writing and stakeholder presentations
- ❖ Exceptional interpersonal skills strengthened through collaborative project work



Experience Sections

You could use Work Experience and Volunteer Experience. But sometimes the below sections give you more control over your resume in highlighting your strengths:

- ✓ Relevant Experience
- ✓ Select Projects
- ✓ Additional Experience
- ❖ Prioritize sections based on relevance
- ❖ Extract transferable skills to use for your bullet points

Writing Effective Bullet Points

- ❖ Focus on accomplishments/impact of action not duties
- ❖ Arrange bullet points from the most important to the least (but still!) important
- ❖ Two models you can use:
 1. What + How + Why
 2. Achievement Verb* (what+why) + How you did it

*available at <https://careerhub.uwaterloo.ca/sections/Marketing/action-verbs.aspx>

WRITE A BULLET POINT ABOUT RESEARCH/PROJECT

- 1) What you did + How did it + Why (outcome or purpose)
- 2) Achievement Verb* (what+why) + How you did it

Additional Experience

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

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

Sept 2017-present

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

Sept 2015-Sept 2016



Professional Development/ Activities and Interests

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Fundamentals of University Teaching Certificate
Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE), UWaterloo

Dec 2018

Leadership Essentials Certificate
University of Toronto

April 2016

ACTIVITIES AND INTERESTS

Member, Second Place Winning Team, IIE Consulting Case Study Competition

Oct 2018

Member, Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE)

Sept 2017-present





5 MINUTE BREAK

Get up, take a bathroom break, dance, get some
water/coffee

COVER LETTERS



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)?

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)

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



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Narrative Approach Prompts

- ❖ What interests you about the company or role you're applying to?
- ❖ What motivations were behind your career choice?
- ❖ What kind of meaningful work, or "impact," would you like to do in your career?
- ❖ Do you share the company values? If yes, how so?
- ❖ How might this job be the next step in your career path?
- ❖ How might your interests, motivations, and/or values contribute to the team?

The image features a black background with several thick, vibrant lines in yellow, green, blue, and pink. These lines are arranged in a complex, overlapping pattern that frames the central text. The text is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered horizontally and vertically. The overall aesthetic is modern and graphic.

**REFLECT: WHAT MIGHT YOUR NARRATIVE
APPROACH BE?**

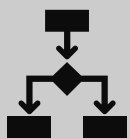
Body Paragraph(s)



Begins with a clear topic sentence and is “unified” throughout the paragraph, letting the reader know exactly what this paragraph is about



Skills-Based Paragraph: One/Two skills across multiple experiences



Experience/Project-based Paragraph: One experience that demonstrates multiple skills



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?



ACTIVITY: THINK OF A STORY YOU'D LIKE TO TELL

Can be about a specific skill, a skill set, your education, or about an experience!

Activity Prompts

- ❖ Think of a story you want to share
- ❖ What skills did you use in this experience? And how?
- ❖ What was the outcome/result?
- ❖ Think of a topic sentence to introduce this story

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

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FAQ:

IS IT POSSIBLE TO CREATE A GENERAL COVER LETTER? I HAVE A LOT OF APPS TO APPLY TO!

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?



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





Regular
Co-op
Undergrad
Masters, PhD, Postdocs
Alumni
Employees



Job Search Tactics
Résumé
Cover Letter
Interview Prep
Career Exploration
Grad School Prep



Individual Appointments
Drop-ins
Workshops
Online Resources

uwaterloo.ca/career-development

Online Resource

The screenshot shows the CareerHub website interface. At the top left is the 'CareerHub' logo, and at the top right is a yellow 'LOG IN' button. The main heading is 'CareerHub' with a logo icon, followed by the sub-heading 'Log in to get started'. Below this is a paragraph of text: 'Take the next step towards planning for your future by logging into the CareerHub (instructions below). If you're not sure where to begin, try starting with the Decision-Making section.' The central area features a blue briefcase icon with the text: 'Résumés, Cover letters, ePortfolios, Job interviews, Academic job applications and interviews, and Negotiating job offers'. Surrounding this central text are six circular icons: 'MY DEGREE & SKILLS' (graduation cap), 'DECISION MAKING' (crossed arrows), 'FURTHER EDUCATION' (classical building), 'SELF-MARKETING' (key), 'SUCCESS AT WORK' (briefcase), and 'WORK: FIND/CREATE' (lock). A white box with the text 'Apply/Interview' is positioned over the 'SELF-MARKETING' icon.



We Also Have Asynchronous Workshops

Further Education Resources

Graduate & Postdoc
Workshops

Creating Your Résumé

Writing a Compelling Cover
Letter

How to Interview Effectively

Personal Branding Part 1:
Build Your Brand

Personal Branding Part 2:
Articulate Your Brand

Networking to Job Search

Academic CVs

Academic Cover Letters

Academic Interviews

Networking at Conferences

Public Scholarship

Graduate & Postdoc Workshops



Unable to attend one of our live workshops or missed a particular workshop you found out about? We have provided these alternative online workshops that you can take any time and at your own pace. In these

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Thank you!