

# Resumes & Cover Letters for Industry Positions

January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Institute of Molecular  
Engineering

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Assistant Director, Graduate Career Development

**UCHICAGO GRAD**

Helping you navigate your graduate and postdoctoral career



# Session Overview

**Part I: Introduction and Formatting**

**Part II: Industry CVs (Résumé/CV “Blends”)**

**Part III: Résumé Review Activity**

**Part IV: Cover Letters**



# Part I: Introduction and Formatting



# What is the difference between a C.V. and a résumé?

	<b>Curriculum Vitae</b>		
<i>Length</i>	No page limit		
<i>Scope</i>	Exhaustive summary		
<i>Purpose</i>	Academic jobs		
<i>Tailoring</i>	Somewhat tailored		
<i>Summary</i>	Research-specific		
<i>Publications</i>	Includes publications		
<i>Bullet use</i>	Optional		



# What is the difference between a C.V. and a résumé?

	<b>Curriculum Vitae</b>		<b>Résumé</b>
<i>Length</i>	No page limit		1 PAGE
<i>Scope</i>	Exhaustive summary		Concise snapshot
<i>Purpose</i>	Academic jobs		Jobs outside research
<i>Tailoring</i>	Somewhat tailored		Acutely tailored
<i>Summary</i>	Research-specific		Can include
<i>Publications</i>	Includes publications		No publications
<i>Bullet use</i>	Optional		Yes



# What is the difference between a C.V. and a résumé?

	<b>Curriculum Vitae</b>	<b>Industry C.V.</b>	<b>Résumé</b>
<i>Length</i>	No page limit	2 PAGES	1 PAGE
<i>Scope</i>	Exhaustive summary	Extended snapshot	Concise snapshot
<i>Purpose</i>	Academic jobs	Research-related jobs	Jobs outside research
<i>Tailoring</i>	Somewhat tailored	Acutely tailored	Acutely tailored
<i>Summary</i>	Research-specific	Recommended	Can include
<i>Publications</i>	Includes publications	Select	No publications
<i>Bullet use</i>	Optional	Yes	Yes



# Format: Fonts to Avoid

Arial

Times New Roman

Calibri

Cambria

Comic Sans



# Format: Fonts That Do Better

**Serifs:** Garamond  
Georgia  
Palatino Linotype

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**Sans** Gotham Light/**Bold**  
**Serif:** Helvetica Neue Light  
Century Gothic  
Trebuchet MS

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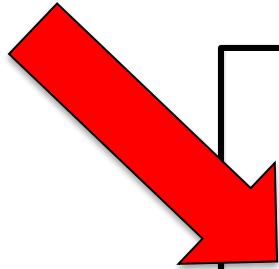
**Size:** 11 - 12





# Format: Margins of Error

**.7' - 1" all around for all docs**



## Post Doc-Fellow, PhD

700 E. 57<sup>th</sup> St. Chicago IL | postdfellow@bsd.uchicago.edu | 773-834-1234

### SUMMARY

- Molecular geneticist and bioinformatics expert with 10+ years of experience in inflammation research
- Principle Investigator on 2 independent grants (\$125K)
- Author of 10 publications in peer-reviewed journals including 4 first-author papers
- Interdisciplinary collaborator with experience working in clinical and translational setting

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

The University of Chicago, Postdoctoral Scholar (AHA Fellow 2013-Present) 2010-Present  
Department of Human Genetics, Laboratory of Pro Fessor

#### **Molecular Biology and Cell Culture**

- Elucidated the molecular mechanisms underlying the asthma genetics by developing novel qPCR assays and measuring protein and microRNA expression by ELISA and qPCR
- Identified genome-wide genetic and epigenetic markers associated with inflammation pathway in asthma using clinical samples and cultured airway epithelial cells
- Collaborated with team of physicians and technicians to acquire human lunch specimens and ensure proper processing
- Trained and led technicians in cell culture procedures and sample processing

#### **Genomics and Bioinformatics**

- Analyzed and interpreted genome-wide methylation, expression array and RNAseq data using R



# Format that Aids Content

2-line contacts →

**William R. Harper**

5801 South University Avenue, 2B | Chicago, IL 60637 | 312-723-2145 | firstprez@uchicago.edu

**Education** →

## EDUCATION

---

**University of Chicago** (Chicago, IL): *MA Social Sciences* Expected June 2016

- Relevant Coursework: History of Higher Education; Statistical Methods
- Thesis Project: “Graduate Education at a Crossroads: an Ethnographic Study of Graduate Students”

**University of Virginia** (Charlottesville, VA): *BA English Language and Literature* June 2012

- Completed second major in Spanish Language and Literature
- Graduated *summa cum laude* with departmental honors in English

**Universidad de Sevilla** (Seville, Spain) June – July 2010

- Completed 8-week intensive Spanish language institute; additional coursework in Spanish history

**Headings** →

## RESEARCH AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

---

**Department of History, University of Chicago** (Chicago, IL) September 2014 – Present

*Research Assistant, Emily Osborn*

- Identifies and writes summaries of research materials (5-10 articles/book-length works per week)
- Manages MS Excel database of 500+ relevant research items; enters information on new items
- Copy-edits book chapters and advanced drafts of journal articles prior to publication
- Provides regularly progress updates via email; completes as-needed administrative tasks
- Supervises 2 Masters students and 6 undergraduate research assistances on a daily basis

**Art Institute of Chicago** (Chicago, IL) May 2013 – July 2013

*Summer Project Intern*

- Collaborated with development team to produce successful NEA exhibition grant application (\$5k funding)
- Attended regular departmental staff meetings; assembled meeting materials

**Spacing** →

## TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

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**Neighborhood Schools Program, University of Chicago** September 2014 – Present

*Tutor*

- Taught two weekly sections (5 students per section) of second grade math



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## Vertical

- Reverse chronological order in each section
- Under each heading, most relevant bullets on top
- More bullets for most recent experiences, fewer for past



# Format that Aids Content



## Horizontal

- Most important information on the left
- Compound bullets can get lost
- Strong action verbs should run down the left-hand side

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# Part II: Industry CVs (Resume/CV “Blends”)



# When to Use Industry CV

Used in application for jobs that require academic/government **research experience**:

- All R&D positions in industry
- Data Scientist (Research Industry/Academic)
- Application Scientist (FAS)
- Patent Agent
- Technical Specialist
- Technology Transfer/ Innovation Management
- Science Policy Jobs/Fellowships
- Science Management Jobs
- Medical Science Liaison
- Medical Writer



# Tailoring to Industry

- Audience includes scientists and **non-expert**/HR personnel
- Demonstrate **scientific credibility** by including publications and presentations
- Use **appropriate detail** to describe the application of relevant technical competencies
- Emphasize **non-scientific skills** (leadership, management, communication to different audiences, writing, budgeting, etc.)
- Include experiences that directly **relate to industry**: patents, startups, regulatory, general business acumen (think of lab as small business)



# Industry CV Structure

## Two Full Pages

- **Required sections**

- Heading (name, contact info)
- Summary - top of P1
- Education - P1
- Experience (or Research Experience) - P1
- Publications (or Select Publications) - P2

- **Optional sections**

- Technical Skills - P1/2 ← Yes! Do this!
- Leadership Experience - P1/2
- Grants - P2
- Patents - P2
- Honors and Awards - P2





# Summary

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### SUMMARY

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- Principle Investigator on 2 independent grants (\$125K)
- Author of 10 publications in peer-reviewed journals including 4 first-author papers
- Interdisciplinary collaborator with experience working in clinical and translational setting

- 3-5 bullet points (short paragraph also common)
- Summarize primary accomplishments (papers, etc.)
- Supplement the accomplishments with soft skills
- Quantify using numbers wherever possible



# Education

## EDUCATION

**University of Chicago** Chicago, IL

Ph.D., Physical Chemistry (Biophysics) *Expected Graduation: 2014*

- Joan Shiu Award: Elected by my peers on the merits of service to the Chemistry Department
- MRSEC Travel Grant: Awarded to fund travel to present research at national conferences

**University of Southern California** Los Angeles, CA

B.S., Biochemistry; Minor, German; *Cum Laude 2009*

- Renaissance Scholar: Awarded for scholastic excellence in widely separate fields
- Dr. James E. Slosson Academic Excellence Award: Highest GPA on the varsity Track & Field team

- Top or bottom of page 1
- Include only degree based programs
- Lead with name of university
- Awards/honors including brief explanation
- Relevant course work - 3 max (optional)
- Dissertation title/advisor (optional)
- This section should not exceed  $\frac{1}{4}$  of page



# Experience

- **Tailored** to each individual job
- Can break up into more **specific sections**
  - “Research Experience”
  - “Analytical Experience”
  - “Lab Management Experience”
  - “Leadership Experience”
  - “Additional Experience”
- Include graduate/postdoc experience
- Lead with name of employer/institution in bold
- “Teaching Experience” not recommended



# Bullet Conventions

## Structure

- Begin with a **strong action verb**: led, analyzed, organized, optimized, characterized, etc.
- Implied **first person**, no pronouns
- Technically fragments, not sentences: no periods at end
- 1 (or 2) lines, never 3

## Tense

- Present tense for ongoing experiences
- Past tense for past experiences

## Verb Selection

- Avoid passive verbs: assisted, observed, helped, participated
- Try not to repeat same verbs



# P.P.I. Method

Ideal bullet: **What** you did, **Why** you did it, and **So What?**

## Project

- Define the problem or question
- What did YOU SPECIFICALLY do to address this?
- Include technical competency if relevant

## Purpose

- Key objective or mission must be clear

## Impact

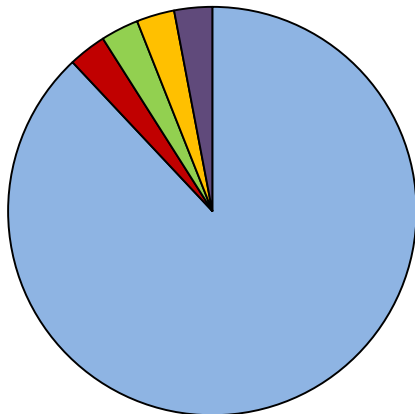
- Tangible outcome from your involvement
- Academic: publications, successful grant applications, recognition in popular media
- Business-like: increased revenue, reduced costs, optimized efficiency, innovation, sustained growth



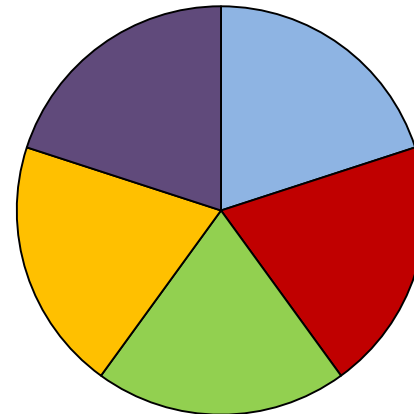
# Balance of Content

- Each bullet should represent a **specific and unique** competency
- **Avoid redundancy:** multiple bullets that only convey technical ability are unnecessary
- Think about **what each bullet says about you** and your abilities
- **Avoid technical language:** write for multiple audiences
- **The proportion of information included** for each experience DOES NOT need to reflect work responsibilities

Actual



Resume



# Transferrable Skills

- How does what you have done relate to the job of [x]?
- Business job? Think of **the lab as a small business** enterprise
- Extracurricular **activities** show management and leadership skills - treat these like other jobs
- Important skills: **communication** (oral and written), **teamwork, leadership**, management, **innovation**, administration, accounting, **customer service**, organizational skills, general **business acumen**



# Describing Grad Experience

- Include as **Education AND Experience**
- Employer - The University of Chicago
  - Department name or laboratory/advisor optional
- Common Titles
  - Graduate Student Researcher
  - Graduate Research Scholar
  - Graduate Researcher
- Transferrable skills
  - **Written communication:** grants, manuscripts, editing
  - **Oral communication:** teaching, seminars, conferences
  - **Project management:** dissertation
  - **Teamwork:** collaborations
  - **Leadership:** teaching, mentoring





# Be Specific/Include Quantities

**Specificity** helps the reader contextualize your experiences

## Less Specific...

- Developed new sequencing method

## More Specific...

- Developed novel amino acid sequencing method using fluorescent-tagged antibody arrays; published in *Nature Methods*
- Improved protein sequence accuracy 30% by decreasing valine/isoleucine conflation
- Collaborated with 2 research groups at Harvard University to commercialize new technology; filed patent application with USPTO

Always **Quantify** when possible

- Dollar amounts - Grants and scholarships awarded, budgets managed
- Percentage changes - Growth, cost reduction, measurable workflow efficiency
- Number of People - Attendees at presentations, students in classes
- Honors and Awards - Specify level of selectivity or prestige

Note: Fake science included for instructional purposes



# Sections: “Skills/Interests”

## Skills section - recommended

- Computer skills - highlight most impressive, less common competencies
- Language skills - fluent, conversational, basic

## Interests - optional

- Chance to “humanize” yourself
- Make these **specific and unique**
- Use only when space allows
- Can lead to interview conversation
- **One line** maximum



# Technical Skills

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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**Molecular Biology:** RNAseq, qPCR, Sanger Sequencing, RFLP, More Stuff, More Stuff

**Data Analysis:** R, Python, STATA, SAS

**Imaging:** Confocal microscopy, fluorescent microscopy

**Some Other Category:** Stuff, stuff, stuff

- **Tailored** to each individual job
- Think of logical **sub-categories** that employers will care about
- Make this section **easy to navigate** for HR and hiring managers
- Adjust categories, order of categories, and order of skills with categories for each job



# Tailoring to Specific Jobs

- **Print out** job description and identify specific research competencies, basic research skills, and soft skills
- Pay attention to **listed order** of competencies and qualifications listed
- Begin your bullets with the **same verbs** used in the job ad wherever possible
- Don't overlook **soft skills**. Companies emphasize teamwork, leadership, oral communication, project management, and writing for a reason. Make sure you have bullets that address these competencies too!



# Example Job Listing 1 – Materials Position

## Job Summary:

The person hired for the position of Sr. Research Scientist will be responsible for developing and characterizing new polymers as part of on-going development programs.

## Primary Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Conducting synthesis, purification, and processing of polymeric materials.
- Designing and developing new advanced materials with unique chemical and physical properties.
- User of appropriate analytical/characterization tools.
- Performing literature and patent searches, scout for new technologies, and actively identify intellectual property and patentable inventions.
- Working in a team environment.
- Other duties as assigned.

## Basic Qualifications:

- Currently possess or in the final year of Ph.D. in a science or engineering discipline from an accredited university
- Current cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on 4.0 scale

## Preferred Qualifications:

- Ph.D. in Polymer Science, Material Science, or Polymer Chemistry with one or more of the following:
  - Synthesis and/or characterization of polymers
  - Polymer structure property relationship
  - Rheology
  - Polymer morphology and/or miscibility
  - Polymer surfaces and interfaces
  - Adhesion Science
- Demonstrated scientific excellence as evidenced by publications and presentations
- Hands on, self-starter orientation
- Broad interests and willingness to explore new areas
- Demonstrated leadership skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills

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- Excellent written and oral communication skills

Research Skills  
and Training

Educational  
Qualifications

Soft Skills

# Example Job Listing 1 - Materials Position

## Bullet Point Examples:

- Developed and optimized fully-conjugated, unique, semiconducting polymers for organic electronics
- Designed, synthesized, and purified polymers utilizing step-growth polymerization, leading to a first author publication in *Polymer Chemistry*
- Characterized the surface chemistry of adhesive polymers, and improved adhesive properties by 85%
- Collaborated with a cross-departmental team to develop and perfect a novel prototype alternating multi-block co-polymer

# Example Job Listing 2 - Data Science

## Job Description

Uses predictive modeling, statistics, Machine Learning, Data Mining, and other data analysis techniques to collect, explore, and extract insights from structure and unstructured data . Develop software, algorithms and applications to apply mathematics to data, perform large scale experimentation and build data driven apps to translate data into intelligence, solve a variety of business problems and enable business strategy. Assists business with casual inferences & observations with finding patterns , relationships in data. Must possess strong understanding of internal business segment (stakeholders) and possess strong written and communication skills. Typically requires expertise in relational database structures, research methods, machine learning, Cloud based technologies, Big Data technologies (i.e. Hadoop , HBase, Lucene/Solr), analytics packages (i.e. R, Mahout, Matlab, Octave, Weka), scripting languages (i.e. Python, Perl), programing languages (i.e. Java, C/C++, SQL). Typically possesses advanced degree in Computer Science, Mathematics, Machine Learning, Operation Research, and Statistics or equivalent expertise.

## Qualifications

What you will be working on

Cutting edge problems in applied AI and ML in one or more of the following areas: computer vision, object detection and localization, speech recognition, natural language processing, recommendation systems, forecasting, and multimodal learning

Developing our Deep Learning framework

Inventing new models that combine unsupervised and supervised learning

Developing new deep learning algorithms to exploit novel distributed processor architectures

Who we are looking for

(PhD, in computer science, electrical engineering or related fields

(statistics, applied math, computational neuroscience) and 3+ years experience.

Background in deep learning, machine learning & big data

Experience designing professional software using Python, C++

Drive to solve customers' problems using technical creativity and hard work

Experience with participating and winning Kaggle competitions

Familiarity with details of implementing algorithms on multi-core CPUs, clusters (MPI), GPUs, heterogenous clusters, distributed frameworks (eg. GraphLab, Spark, Hadoop)



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Research Skills  
and Training

Educational  
Qualifications

Soft Skills

# Example Job Listing 2 - Data Science

## Bullet Point Examples:

- Developed natural language processing algorithms using predictive modeling and machine learning techniques
- Characterized both structured and unstructured data to build optimized algorithms for automatic speech recognition, leading to a first author publication in the *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*
- Utilizing Hadoop, created a data-driven app that incorporated customer behavior and market trends, leading to a 27% increase in sales since implementation

# Example Job Listing 2 - Data Science

## Technical Skills

- Distributed frameworks: Hadoop, Spark, GraphLab
- Programming Languages: C/C++, SQL, Java
- Scripting Languages: Python, Perl
- Analytics: R, MATLAB

# Example Job Listing 3 – Biometric Position

## Job Summary:

The person hired for the position of Biometric Research Scientist will be part of developing the next generation biometric algorithms and pushing the boundaries of signal/image processing and biometric accuracy and speed for existing technologies in the areas of finger, palm, face, iris as well as other modalities. You will be joining a collaborative environment focused on innovation and development of disruptive core technologies.

If this sounds interesting then the 3M Biometrics Laboratory may be right for you! The Laboratory is part of 3M Identity Management Business, a global industry leader in biometric identification solutions, border management system, and identification issuance system, supports a worldwide customer base which includes law enforcement agencies at local and national levels, civil governments, and commercial customers.

## Primary Responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- Leads and conducts scientific research in the areas of image processing, biometric acquisition, feature extraction and recognition.
- Implements, develops and integrates algorithms into various internal and external deliverables such as SDKs, SW and HW products.
- Determines high valued recommendations for core technology roadmaps
- Supports, tests and troubleshoots existing and new algorithms, technologies and products.

## Basic Qualifications:

- Master's degree or higher from an accredited institution
- Minimum of three (3) years of any combination of experience with scientific R&D in the areas of image processing, signal processing, and/or biometrics
- Minimum of three (3) years of experience in C/C++ programming

## Preferred Qualifications:

- PhD degree from an accredited institution in Mathematics, Electrical Engineering, or Computer Science with focus on Biometrics, Computer Vision, Statistical Classification/Machine Learning.
- Minimum of five or more (5+) years of experience and algorithm development in image/signal processing and statistical detection/classification/estimation theory or equivalent experience.
- Experience in algorithm development, implementation, and validation
- Minimum of five or more (5+) years of programming C/C++ for Windows and Linux
- Strong collaboration and information sharing skills
- Good verbal and written English communication skills
- Driven and organized development and project management abilities,
- Proactive and innovative problem solver
- Passion for next generation technologies with abilities to predict and recommend technology trends

Now... you tell me

- What are the research skills?
- Education and training qualifications?
- Soft skills?

# Example Job Listing 3 - Biometric Position

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Educational  
Qualifications

Soft Skills

# Example Job Listing 3 - Biometric Position

## Bullet Point Examples:

- Developed quantitatively based image processing metrics to assess severity of injuries to the hand and fingers
- Conducted statistical analyses in R to measure hand and finger nerve damage from CT scans
- Designed and implemented biometric algorithms, which were then integrated into an analytical SDK
- Collaborated with an international research team on next generation technologies in biometric accuracy, which lead to a publication in *Medical Physics*



# Industry CV: Example 2

## Post D. Fellow, PhD

Street Address, Chicago, IL, 60615

Cell phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx Email: [email@uchicago.edu](mailto:email@uchicago.edu)

### Summary of qualifications

- Cell and Molecular Biologist with 10 years of research experience and an established record of a clear scientific contribution in the field of neurodegeneration
- Experienced in developing and optimizing innovative assays using a broad range of approach and techniques to elucidate the molecular pathways contributing to Alzheimer's pathogenesis
- Experienced in written and oral communication to various audience from academics and students to business leaders through review/editing and 20+ oral presentations
- Demonstrated abilities to collaborate and take leadership within and outside academic setting through team and project management, and volunteer activities

### Experience

#### The University of Chicago, Department of Neurobiology, Post-doctoral Scholar Jan. 2009 - present

- Initiated investigations and successfully developed innovative assay to explore protein trafficking after endocytosis by live imaging in primary cultured neurons
- Lead research project and coordinated collaboration with 5 laboratories resulting in the discovery of a transport mode in neurons and the identification of regulators of BACE1 endosomal transport impacting the production of the toxic peptide (amyloid), which accumulates in the brain of patients with Alzheimer's disease
- Published 5 scientific articles in peer-reviewed journal, including 3 in top tier journals
- Obtained funding as a principal investigator (Alzheimer's Disease Research Fund from the Illinois Department of Health, 2011) and generated critical data for funding a collaborative project with Northwestern University on the research I initiated through a \$400 000 grant from Cure Alzheimer's

#### European University, E.U., Graduate Student Oct.2004 – Dec. 2008

- Initiated investigation on the transcriptional regulation of BACE1 in Alzheimer's disease using biochemistry and cell biology techniques and established the contribution of the inflammatory molecule NFkB in Alzheimer's pathogenesis
- Published 2 scientific articles, first author study cited over 50 times, including in one patent
- Obtained 2 fellowships from the French Government (Research and Education Ministry, 3 years funding) and from the Fondation pour la Recherche Medicale (1 year funding)

#### Volunteer in a research laboratory, Industry, E.U. Oct. 2004- Sept. 2008

- 4 years of experience in in vivo rodent models of Parkinson's disease
- 2nd author of 2 scientific articles highlighting genes expression activated in the context of dyskinesia in Parkinson's disease due to long term treatment with L-DOPA in rodent models of the disease.

### Education

Ph.D. Cell and Molecular Biology, Neurobiology specialization, European University, City, E.U. Country.	2008
M.A Integrative and Cellular Biology, Another European University, City, E.U. Country	2004
B.A Cell and Molecular Biology, Another European University, City, E.U. Country	2002

### Leadership and scientific activities

- Management:**
  - Trained 16 students from various background, 3 technicians, and junior personnel
  - Involved in the mentoring of 2 Neurobiology graduate students of the University of Chicago
  - Hosted a student exchange program with E.U. universities and Engineering schools since 2011 (3 students in Masters and Engineers in Biotechnology, 1 Graduate student in Neurosciences)
- Scientific Advisor:** Clinical Research Exchange Initiative for the Center of Healthcare Innovation, Chicago
- Review/Editing:**
  - Review editor for *Frontiers Neurosciences* (since 2013)
  - Ad hoc reviewer for *J. Neurosci.*, *Neurosci. Let.*, *J. Neurochem.*: over 25 peer review evaluations since 2009
  - Grant reviewer: Illinois Department of Health 2012, and 2013 (lead reviewer); National Agency, E.U.
- Committee Chair:**
  - Seminar organization and Social Media Outreach - University of Chicago Post-doctoral Association (July 2013)
  - Social Media Outreach- University of Chicago Biotechnology Association (August 2013)

### Honors and Awards

- University of Chicago Post-doctoral researcher spotlight, January 2014
- Poster award Chicago Chapter of Society for Neuroscience, 2012
- National Foundation Award, (E.U. Country) 2011

### Selected presentations:

- Invited Speaker to Convergence Coffee, "Alzheimer's disease: from the cell to therapy."; CURANT.co (Strategy consulting firm for senior executives and organizations in Healthcare and Life Science), 2014
- Selected speaker at 3 Nanosymposium at the Society for Neuroscience Conference 2010, 2011, and 2013
- Invited Lecturer at the University of Chicago: Honored Biology students (2013), Biophysics graduate students (2014)
- 5 oral presentations at the Translational Neuroscience Seminar of the University of Chicago since 2009
- 12 poster presentations including 3 at international conferences (Society for Neuroscience Meetings (2009, 2012); Alzheimer's Association International Conference, 2006)

### Selected Publications (out of 9)

- First Author publication  
*Science Translational Medicine*, 2014
- First Author Publication  
*Cell Reports*, 2013
- Second Author Publication  
*Cell Reports*, 2013
- First Author Publication  
*Molecular Neurodegeneration*, 2013





# Part III: Resume Review Activity



# Part IV:

# Cover Letters

(for everything except academic jobs)



# Purpose of a Cover Letter

- Expand on a **few** items in your resume
- Discuss your **motivation** for seeking employment in this field
- Explain why you are a **good fit** for the specific unit/team
- Demonstrate **written communication** skills
- Provides proof of **legitimate interest** in each company



# Cover Letter Basics

- 1/2 to 3/4 of a page
- Use **examples with outcomes** and avoid lists
- Emphasize **how you will help the company**
- Distinguish yourself by highlighting more than one distinct competency
- Consider including one example of an accomplishment **outside of research**
- Highlight **leadership, communication, teamwork, project management**
- Maintain a positive tone
- **Tailor** to each company, unit, and job



# Tailoring

- Do not submit the same cover letter for each job!
- **Research company** and use language that reflects how it describes itself and its mission
- If you have time - try to speak with current or former employees before applying to inform what you write
- Cite **conversations** with current or former employees
- Use the **job description** - that generic sounding language about the company can help here!
- Relate each example back to the company
- Address actual recruiter/hiring manager **by name**



# Generic Cover Letter

## Paragraph 1

- Introduction
- Specific reason(s) for interest in company
  - Conversations with current/past employees
  - Info from website, publications, media, social media
- Thesis: 2 distinct competencies, A & B

## Paragraph 2

- Example using competency A (research)
- Relate example back to company and their research

## Paragraph 3

- Example using competency B (\*non-research)
- Relate example to different aspect of company

## Paragraph 4

- Thank you sentence - Look forward to interview



# Paragraph 1

As a current PhD student at the University of Chicago with experience in the field of monetary hygiene, I am applying for the position of Sr. Money Launderer at Trustworthy Bank. From my conversation with Tex E. Vader, Associate Director of Cleanliness, I learned that Trustworthy not only launders currency, but is developing a proprietary disinfectant to create the world's cleanest money. Given my extensive research on sanitary paper and my established record of misdemeanor crime, I am confident I could quickly deliver value for Trustworthy Bank and its clients.

- Introduction
- Specific reason(s) for interest in company
  - Conversations with current/past employees
- Thesis: 2 distinct competencies, A & B



# Paragraph 2

My doctoral research focused on ways to improve the cleanliness of toilet paper. I sought to create a tissue that not only cleaned but disinfected at the same time. By combining household cleaners with industrial strength disinfectants, I was able to create the first tissue that makes the skin 90% more resistant to microbial infection than standard tissue. At Trustworthy, I intend to use similarly innovative techniques to maintain optimal money laundering conditions.

- Restate Competency A
- Example of applying Competency A
- Link Competency explicitly to company/role





# Paragraph 3

Beyond my expertise in laundering, I also bring a uniquely morally indifferent attitude that will serve Trustworthy well. During my internship at the Maroon Bank, I routinely embezzled office supplies. I amassed such a collection that after one summer, I was able to sell it on eBay for \$500. This was enough to buy my first forgery kit. This propensity toward white-collar crime will be an asset to Trustworthy in its effort to defraud investors while also providing them with the world's cleanest currency.

- Restate Competency B
- Example of applying Competency B
- Link Competency explicitly to company/role



# Paragraph 4

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to learning more about Trustworthy and elaborating on my skills and experiences in an interview.

- Thank you sentence - Look forward to interview



# Formal Format

Your contact info



Amber Shady  
1234 Hyde Park Way  
Chicago, IL 60637  
123.345.5678  
ashady@uchicago.edu

Their full  
address



David Trust  
SVP, Money Laundering  
Trustworthy Bank  
1201 Ave of the Americas 26th Floor  
New York, NY 10002

Date



January 9, 2016

Address it  
to a real  
person!



Dear Mr. David Trust,

As a current PhD student at the University of Chicago with experience in the field of monetary hygiene, I am applying for the position of Sr. Money Launderer at Trustworthy Bank. From my conversation with TexE. Vader, Associate Director of Cleanliness, I learned that Trustworthy not only launders currency, but is developing a proprietary disinfectant to create the world's cleanest money. Given my extensive research on sanitary paper and my established record of misdemeanor crime, I am confident I could quickly deliver value for Trustworthy Bank and its clients.

My doctoral research focused on ways to improve the cleanliness of toilet paper. I sought to create a tissue that not only cleaned but disinfected at the same time. By combining household cleaners with industrial strength disinfectants, I was able to create the first tissue that makes the skin 90% more resistant to microbial infection than standard tissue. At Trustworthy, I intent to use similarly innovative techniques to maintain optimal money laundering conditions.

Beyond my expertise in laundering, I also bring a uniquely morally indifferent attitude that will serve Trustworthy well. During my internship at the Maroon Bank, I routinely embezzled office supplies. I amassed such a collection that after one summer, I was able to sell it on eBay for \$500. This was enough to buy my first forgery kit. This propensity toward white-collar crime will be an asset to Trustworthy in its effort to defraud investors while also providing them with the world's cleanest currency.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to learning more about Trustworthy and elaborating on my skills and experiences in an interview.

Yours Sincerely,

Amber Shady



Physical  
Signature

# Questions?

[bkonnick@uchicago.edu](mailto:bkonnick@uchicago.edu)

## Add me on LinkedIn!

[www.linkedin.com/in/bkonnick](http://www.linkedin.com/in/bkonnick)

## Advising Appointments:

[Gradgargoyle.uchicago.edu](http://Gradgargoyle.uchicago.edu)

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