

**BSN JOB SEARCH:  
RESUME AND COVER LETTER  
PREPARATION**

# Key questions regarding your resume and cover letter



- If a recruiter skimmed your resume for 10 seconds, what would you want to stand out?
- After reading your resume/cover letter, how you want the recruiter to complete the following sentence?
  - “This candidate .....



# Key questions regarding your resume and cover letter

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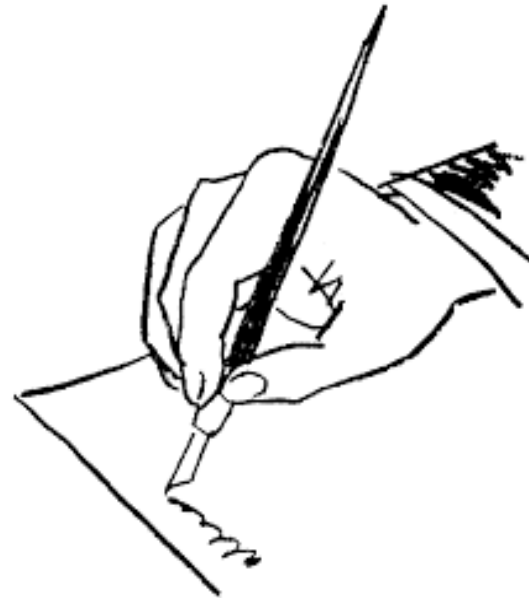


- What story do you want to tell about your background, interests and strengths?
- What themes do you want to highlight?
- How will you help the recruiter connect the dots?



# What we'll cover

- Resume
  - Contact information
  - Objective
  - Education
  - Experience
  - Leadership / Activities
  - Additional Information
- Cover Letter
  - Structure & Strategies



# Contact Information

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## Charlene Clinical

*Current Address:* 111 South 41st Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

*Permanent Address:* 1234 Main Street, West Chester, PA 19346

*Phone:* 215-222-1234

*Email:* [charclinical@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:charclinical@nursing.upenn.edu)

## Patrick Pediatrics

2000 Walnut Street Apt. 12, Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-123-4567 • [patrickpeds@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:patrickpeds@nursing.upenn.edu)

# Resume: Objective



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- An objective is not generally necessary, but can be useful if there is a specific focus.
  - Examples:
    - A position at a pediatric hospital that will build on my previous experiences as a nurse extern, camp counselor, and child care worker.
    - To obtain a student nurse externship position in critical care.

# Resume: Education



- Traditional:

## EDUCATION

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**University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, Philadelphia, PA**

Bachelor of Science in Nursing, with Psychology minor expected May 2013

*Honors:* Laurie Smullin Russell Nursing Scholarship

# Resume: Education



- Second Degree:

## EDUCATION

**University of Pennsylvania**, Philadelphia, PA

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Accelerated Second Degree Program), expected Dec. 2010

*Cumulative G.P.A.:* 3.88/4.00

*Honors:* Student Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania Scholarship Recipient 2009

**Tufts University**, Medford, MA

Bachelor of Arts in Child Development, May 2006

*Cumulative G.P.A.:* 3.36/4.00



# Resume: Experience



- Feature your most relevant/related experience.
  - Clinical Experience
    - *Within Clinical Rotations:* List in a streamlined way, perhaps with more detail for particularly notable or relevant rotations. Focus on accomplishments and highlights.
    - *Outside of Clinical Rotations:* Externships, Volunteer Clinical Work, Nurse's Aide or related experience
  - Other Health Related Experience
    - Research Experience
    - Public/Community/International Health Experience
- Other experience can go in an "Additional Experience" or "Other Relevant Experience" section to showcase other important skills.

# Resume: Experience

## Sample 1



### Education

**University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing, Philadelphia, PA**

*Bachelor of Science in Nursing, expected May 2012*

*Honors: Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honors Society, Dean's List, 2010-2011 & 2011-2012*

#### **Clinical Rotations Completed:**

- New York Presbyterian Hospital Weill-Cornell Medical Center—Leadership rotation in Emergency Dept. (Spring 2012)
- Mercy Home Health System—Community rotation (Fall 2011)
- Pennsylvania Hospital/Hall Mercer Outpatient Center—Psychiatric rotation (Fall 2011)
- University of Pennsylvania—Obstetrical, medical and surgical rotations (Spring 2011, Fall 2010)
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia/Seashore House—Pediatric rotation (Fall 2010)
- University City High School—Ran health education sessions for teenagers (Spring 2010)

### Healthcare and Related Experience

**Nurse Extern—Coronary Care Unit, General Adult Medical Floor, Orthopedic Floor**

*WellSpan Health System: York Hospital, York, PA*

*May - August 2011*

- Worked 5 weeks on each floor with a nurse preceptor. Performed basic nursing care, assessed patients, reviewed medications, documented care and interventions, and collaborated with health care team. Admitted and discharged patients under the direction of preceptor.

**Physician Office Assistant**

*WellSpan Health System: Apple Hill Internal Medicine, York, PA*

*May - August 2010*

- Took patient medical histories, charted vital signs, collected specimens, observed and assisted with office procedures, and performed point of care glucose and EKG testing.

**Office Assistant**

*WellSpan Health System: Office of Women & Parent Education, York, PA*

*May - August 2009*

- Organized childbirth classes, created educational materials for prenatal and postnatal care, answered phones, directed mothers to appropriate classes, addressed educational needs of mothers and their families.

### Additional Work Experience

**Work Study Assistant**

*University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, Philadelphia, PA*

*September 2010 - May 2012*

- Assisted in undergraduate and graduate recruitment activities for the School of Nursing. Performed administrative duties, entered confidential information into the computer system, answered phones and assisted students in the offices of Enrollment Management and Student Services.

# Resume: Experience

## Sample 2



### CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

#### **Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA**

*Student Nurse* – Obstetrics/Pediatrics

Spring 2012

- Administer PO and IV medication
- Shadow nurses in Labor & Delivery, Intensive Care Nursery, Perinatal Evaluation Center, and OB/GYN

*Student Nurse* – Medical/Surgical

Fall 2011

- Administered PO and IV medication
- Completed physical assessments and checked vital signs
- Performed morning routine, such as bathing patients and changing bed sheets
- Educated patients on wound care, infection control, and proper usage of incentive spirometers

#### **Bethany Medical Bus, Philadelphia, PA**

*Volunteer* - Missions-oriented medical school bus

Oct-Nov 2011

- Counseled clients; offered information about HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, and drug use
- Provided additional contacts to clinics, rehabilitation centers, and churches

#### **St. Peter's Hospital, Atlanta, GA**

*Hospital Volunteer* – Obstetrics

2008-2010

- Visited patients' rooms to seek after their comfort and care
- Ran errands for nurses, such as getting tissue boxes or ice chips for patients

### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

#### **University of Pennsylvania, Department of Psychiatry, Philadelphia, PA**

Summer 2012

*Research Assistant*

Spring, Summer 2011

- Assisted in genetic schizophrenia and bipolar project using mouse olfactory tissue
- Embedded and cut tissue samples to then utilize for immunohistochemistry experiments
- Worked with imaging programs on light and fluorescent microscopes
- Processed mouse and human tissue samples to retrieve DNA sequencing

# Resume: Experience

## Sample 3



### SELECTED HEALTH-RELATED EXPERIENCE

**Children's Hospital of Philadelphia**, Philadelphia, PA  
*Student Nurse, Senior Leadership Clinical, NICU*  
*Student Nurse, General Pediatrics*

Fall 2014  
Spring 2014

**Assistant to Diane Spatz, PhD, RN**, Philadelphia, PA  
*Administrative and Research Assistant*

2013-Present

- Collect data regarding hospital-wide breast milk management and "Kangaroo Care" in the NICU at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).
- Assist with pump rental station at CHOP.
- Research; spreadsheet development; publication assistance; survey data management; clerical duties as assigned.

**Healthy Families Evaluation**, Medford, MA  
*Research Assistant Intern*

Summer 2009, 2008

- Coded data collected from client interviews for a comprehensive evaluation of an educational program for first-time teen mothers

### ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Philadelphia Nanny Network**, Ardmore, PA  
*Nanny*

2011-2012

- Provided childcare for various families
- Cared for a six week old newborn infant for five months, primarily during daytime hours.

**Elite Educational Institute**, Seoul, Korea  
*English Teacher*

2010-2011

- Instructed Korean students, 2nd through 8th graders, in English vocabulary, reading, writing, speaking and conversation.

**Peabody Terrace Children's Center**, Cambridge, MA  
*Infant Room Teacher (Jan. 2010-Aug. 2010)*

2008-2010

- Provided individualized care, developed curriculum, documented and assessed development, and cultivated open relationships with families at a Harvard University affiliated childcare center and preschool.
- Collaborated on a teaching team of three teachers and one assistant teacher.

*Floating Teacher (Sept. 2008-Jan. 2010)*

- Worked full-time with infants through preschoolers on five different teaching teams.

# Resume: Leadership & Activities



There are various ways to format your activities:

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND ACTIVITIES

- Student Nurses At Penn: Co-chair of Second-Degree Peer Advising Committee (2016-present)
- National Nurses' Association of Pennsylvania: Member (2016-present)
- Hwasang Baby Orphanage, Seoul, Korea: Volunteer (2015-2016)
- Boston Cares: Project Leader, Summer Intern, Volunteer (2010-2012)
- Volunteer Vacations @ Tufts University: Program Co-Coordinator, Group Leader, Volunteer (2011-2012)

## LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES

- **Secretary/Treasurer, Student Nurses at Penn (SNAP), December 2016 – present:** Develop and implement budget. Advise the board about finances. Organize minutes and complete paperwork for the organization.
- **Community Service Chair, Student Nurses at Penn (SNAP), December 2015 – December 2016:** Planned American Red Cross Blood Drives and service projects. Attended the National Student Nurses Association Annual Convention in Nashville, TN in April 2010 and the Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania Convention in the Poconos in November 2010.
- **Newman Council Board Member, January 2015 – December 2015:** Planned activities with the Newman Catholic community, including Operation Santa Claus and other service projects.
- **Alternative Spring Break, March 2014:** Worked at the Denver Rescue Mission in Colorado, serving meals and sorting donations.

# Resume: Additional Information

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- Language Skills
- Certifications
- Specialized Computer Skills
- Interests/Hobbies

For example:

## **SKILLS AND INTERESTS**

- Languages – Proficient in Spanish and French, 2 years of Russian
- Music/Dance – voice, piano, guitar; 8 years ballet, hip hop and jazz classes

# Elements of a Cover Letter



- Why you're interested
- How you're qualified as a clinician
- How you're qualified in other ways
- What's next

# Cover Letter: First Element

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## Why you're interested

Note what position you are applying for and what appeals to you about the hospital/facility and the position. For a more general letter of interest/application, indicate interests while communicating flexibility.

- Mission Statement/Core Values
- Recent news/projects/initiatives
- Clinical/Research specialties
- Conversation with or referral from current employee
- Previous experience with the hospital/facility



# Cover Letter Sample 1:

## Why you're interested: Direct Exposure

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“This semester, I am conducting my senior leadership clinical at Pennsylvania Hospital, in the dedicated AIDS and oncology unit, where I am gaining exposure to another outstanding aspect of your facility. Through these experiences, I have been able to see firsthand the excellent quality of patient care, the cooperative multi-disciplinary approach, and progressive techniques that are trademarks of Pennsylvania Hospital.”

# Cover Letter Sample 2:

## Why you're interested: Referral

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“I am writing to introduce myself to you at the suggestion of Dr. Howard Patterson, who is a long-time family friend. As a newcomer to Atlanta, I have heard a great deal about the high quality of nursing care at Emory University Hospital. My professional goal is to enhance my medical/surgical background in a university affiliated hospital, and eventually to work in a surgical step-down unit. I therefore would like to be considered for any available positions at Emory University Hospital.”

# Cover Letter Sample 3:

Why you're interested: Specifics about Hospital  
(Mission, Specialties, Approach)



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“I feel certain the Center Hospital’s **community-based hospital maternity department**, with its focus on individual attention for childbearing women throughout pregnancy and delivery, will be a great place to utilize and expand my nursing and teaching skills.”

# Cover Letter: Second Element

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## How you're qualified as a clinician

Highlight your clinical experience and skills.

- Make a connection between your experience and the responsibilities listed in the job description.
- Pick 1 or 2 experiences that are most related to the position.
- Focus on accomplishments and impact made.

# Cover Letter Sample 4: How you're qualified

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“ As indicated in my enclosed resume, I was employed last summer as a Nurse Extern on a medical/surgical floor at Pennsylvania Hospital. This experience increased my nursing skills and provided me with a broader base of clinical knowledge. ”

# Cover Letter Sample 5: How you're qualified

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“As indicated on my resume, I hold a B.S.N. from the University of Pennsylvania and have had clinical rotations in a variety of hospital and non-hospital settings. My Senior Leadership Experience provided a particularly intensive involvement in the surgical step-down unit of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, and my nurse externship at Yale-New Haven Hospital last summer also afforded me exposure to a similar unit, with the added opportunity to participate in various procedures.

These experiences were extremely beneficial and enabled me to confirm my commitment to the field of nursing. For the past year, I have also volunteered at a home health agency, which has been a rewarding and challenging experience, and has helped me to develop my skills in working with patients recovering at home from surgical procedures.”

# Cover Letter Sample 6: How you're qualified

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“As you will see from my resume, the earliest building blocks of my nursing career, even before completing nursing school, have their foundation in women’s health. My elective senior year clinical rotation in Labor and Delivery, Postpartum and Nursery Care allowed me to integrate maternity and newborn care at a more advanced stage of my nursing education in a small, community health setting.”

# Cover Letter: Third Element

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## How you're qualified in other ways.

Discuss how you can leverage complementary skill sets.

- Leadership experience
- Community involvement
- Research experience
- International experience
- Previous work experience



# Cover Letter Sample 7: How you're qualified

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“In addition to my nursing skills, I will bring to my next employer strong leadership and organizational skills gained through my extra-curricular involvement. **Balancing course work, clinical experiences, and a work study job** at Penn’s Student Health Office with my leadership position in Student Nurses at Penn has required commitment, time management and, often, a well regarded sense of humor. **Preceptors, advisors, and supervisors have commented on my ability** to manage multiple tasks simultaneously while maintaining a level of enthusiasm for the project at hand.”

# Cover Letter Sample 8: How you're qualified

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“Furthermore, my work with expectant mothers as a research assistant, my years as a reproductive health counselor and educator, and most recently my work as a Community Health Nurse with Planned Parenthood have allowed me to focus my energies on the care of women and families, which is what drew me to nursing.”

# Cover Letter: Fourth Element

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## What's next

Conclude your letter by:

- Thanking the reader for his/her time
- Noting your availability for an interview in order to discuss your interest and qualifications further
- Providing your contact information

# Cover Letter Sample 9: What's Next

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“Thank you for taking the time to review my resume. I would welcome the chance to meet with you to discuss possible employment opportunities. I will be available for an interview at your convenience and may be reached at (515) 555-1212, or via e-mail at [monichev@gmail.com](mailto:monichev@gmail.com). I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Monique Nurse”

# Cover Letter Sample 10: What's Next

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“I would be delighted to begin my career with Pennsylvania Hospital. If you would like to contact me, my home phone number is 215-555-4177, and my e-mail address is nurseemily@yahoo.com. I look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,  
Emily Nurse”

# Questions?



**Please contact us!**  
**University of Pennsylvania**  
**Career Services**  
**Suite 20, McNeil Bldg., 3718 Locust Walk**



Schedule an appointment via [Handshake](#) or call (215) 898-4381  
Nursing Walk-ins: Mondays, 12:00-1:00pm

[www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices)