



NURSING

Resume & Cover Letter Guide

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This Guide is for You

In this guide you will find instructions and samples to assist you in crafting your resume and cover letter for your practicum and for professional positions after graduation. Having well crafted application materials is incredibly important when entering a competitive job market. You only get one chance to make a first impression, so make sure your resume and cover letter are helping your reader to understand what an amazing candidate you are.

In addition to this guide you can also utilize the Career Services and Advising Center for feedback on your materials, interview preparation, and job search support both while you are a student and up to 5 years after graduation. Simply email careercenter@fitchburgstate.edu or call 978-665-3151

What is the Purpose of a Resume?

A resume is often an organization's first impression of you. It should be used as a marketing tool to tell your story by presenting your skills, knowledge, and experience to a potential employer/practicum placement in a concise, easy-to-read way. The average employer spends only 15 to 20 seconds reviewing a resume. Your resume should be targeted at a specific organization/position, error-free and easy for a hiring manager to quickly skim and get an idea of your qualifications for a position.

There is not one perfect layout for your resume, but your practicum resume should be:

- Organized logically
- Easy to understand
- Consistent (spacing, formatting, font, use of bold/italics, etc.)
- One page limit

Avoid

- **Pronouns:** Personal or possessive pronouns (I, my, me, we, our) are not necessary
- **Typos and spelling mistakes:** Spellcheck does not always catch typos. Have at least 2 other people proofread your resume.
- **Premade templates:** These can be rigid and difficult to alter to your specific needs.
- **Excessive graphic design:** Keep it simple, don't use unusual fonts, color, clipart, text boxes, etc.

Tips about Formatting in Google Docs

Right-Aligned Tabs for Dates

1. Left justify your text.
2. Drag your cursor through the dates you want to align.
3. Go to View > Ruler and make sure there's a check mark next to Ruler so the ruler is visible.
4. Click in the ruler where you want the dates to align and select "Add right-tab stop."
5. Press the tab key before each date and it will right-align.

To apply the tab formatting to the rest of the dates or other portions of your document, you can use the Paint Tool.

What should you include in your Practicum Resume?

For your practicum resume there is a more rigid format you must follow to qualify for placement. Use the chart below and sample on the next page to craft your resume.

ESSENTIAL

- **Name and Contact Information:** First and Last name, address (just city/town and state), email, phone
- **Education:** Degree(s), GPA, significant awards, graduation date
- **Certifications:** BLS and other relevant certifications.
- **Clinical Experiences:** Clinical rotations, locations, dates
- **Job Experience:** Organization, position title, and date only (more in depth description for LPN to BSN students)
- **Volunteer Work/Leadership Roles**
- **Awards**
- **Language Fluency** (if applicable)

OPTIONAL

- **Professional Summary:** A professional summary is great for those with more experience (example: LPN to RN program).
- **Academic & Co-curricular Activities**
- **Awards**
- **Volunteer Experience:** If you have relevant volunteer experience, include it! Unrelated volunteer experience is optional
- **Unrelated Job Experience:** Depending on how much nursing/clinical experience you have you may want to add unrelated job experience to show transferable skills)

How to Copy Formatting in Google Docs

Google docs lets you copy the formatting you've applied to a specific section of text to another section using the paint format tool. To use this tool, select the text that's formatted in the way that you want to copy. Then, click the paint roller icon in your toolbar, and select the text to which you want to apply the formatting. The formatting from the original text will be copied to the selected text.

To change the formatting in multiple places within your document, double-click the paint roller icon. You'll enter a mode that lets you highlight multiple text selections, and apply the same formatting to each selection. When you're done applying formatting to these selections, click the paint roller icon again.

Student Name

Fitchburg State University, Senior Nursing Student

City, State

Phone # • FSU email address

Education

Fitchburg State University — Fitchburg, MA
Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Month/Year of Anticipated
Current GPA (optional)

Clinical Experiences

Community Health Rotation
Location, City, State

Semester/Year

Chronic Illness Rotation
Agency, City, State

Semester/Year

Continue list of Rotations
Location / City, State

Semester/Year

Employment

Company/Organization
Position

Month/Year to Month/Year

Volunteer Work/Leadership Roles

Where / What Role

Dates or Year(s)

Certifications

B.L.S., American Heart Association

Since (Year)

Awards

List any award(s) chronologically, most recent first

Date

Language Fluency

Can be removed if English is the only language

Your practicum cover letter is uploaded to the statewide database of all clinical practicum sites with your resume. This means that the same letter will be seen by ALL potential clinical preceptors. Your cover letter will need to highlight your skills, strengths and experiences, but also be general enough to address all potential practicum sites. Your cover letter is an opportunity for you to stand out from other applicants and highlight experience and skills that set you apart.

Tips

- **Address your letter generally:** Write your letter “To whom it may concern.” Do not write your letter to a specific placement or person. You do not want to alienate potential hospitals/units. They will already have your ranked preferences of placements, do not include this in the cover letter.
- **Consider your areas of strength:** What do you feel sets you apart from other candidates? Do you excel in a fast paced environment? Are you especially good with geriatric patients? Do you have keen attention to detail? Highlight your greatest strengths and back them up with examples.
- **Use Specific Examples:** Don’t just state that you have experience, back it up with evidence! Don’t just repeat what you have on your resume, but rather elaborate on two or three key skills/experiences and describe how they directly relate to a practicum position
- **Keep Your Audience in Mind:** Focus on what YOU bring to the placement, not what you will get out of the experience. They know they will provide a great learning experience for you, describe how your skills and experience make you a great pick for this position.
- **Write Well and Proofread:** This is the first impression you make with your practicum site, so make sure you are using proper grammar, spelling, and coherent flow. If your cover letter is sloppy, they will assume this is a sample of how you work. You can also use the writing center in Academic Coaching and Tutoring for an extra proofread!
- **Do not overthink this!** It’s easy to get really in your head about professional language and trying to sound fancy that you use words that are not reflective of who you really are. You want to be professional and polished, but not sound like a robot.
- **Be brief:** Cover letters should be limited to one page, 3-4 paragraphs at most.

Cover Letter Format

Your Name

Date

To whom it may concern,

Opening Paragraph

In your first paragraph, introduce yourself and why you believe you would be a good fit for a practicum placement. Mention two or three skills or experiences that you believe set you apart.

Second Paragraph

Explain your background for the preceptor. Elaborate on which of your experiences have prepared you to excel in your practicum placement. Don’t just tell them about your skills: show them with specific examples. This could include how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate, clinical rotations, work or volunteer experience. Do not reiterate all the information that is on your resume, but rather focus on a few key points that highlight your skills/experience.

Closing Paragraph

Thank the reader for their consideration.

Indicate your desire for a meeting or interview and how they can contact you to follow up. Include your contact information (email and phone number).

Sincerely,

Your Name

PRACTICUM COVER LETTER EXAMPLES

Below are some cover letter examples. **DO NOT** use these as templates to change a few words around and submit as your own. Remember, your letter will be in a database of hundreds of nursing students with very similar experiences and qualifications. Your cover letter is your first impression and your only opportunity to stand out and highlight YOUR unique skills. Put some thought and effort into it!

Student Name

Date

Dear Practicum Coordinator,

I am writing to express my interest in a Senior Practicum position. As a dedicated and highly motivated nursing student at Fitchburg State University, I bring over four years of valuable clinical experience gained across diverse healthcare settings, fostering my passion for patient-centered care.

My skills in providing comprehensive patient care were strengthened during my Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) position at UMass Memorial HealthAlliance within the Cardiology department. In this role, I utilized strong communication skills while interacting with patients of various backgrounds and needs. I also gained proficiency in accurate documentation of patient information and concerns, effective patient interviewing techniques, the identification of significant signs and symptoms, and consistent adherence to vital sign routines, proper PPE utilization, and safety protocols. My experience primarily working with senior patients has honed my ability to individualize care and interventions, considering factors such as memory difficulties, hearing loss, and the involvement of family or other caregivers.

My recent transition to a CNA position in the Emergency Department at Heywood Hospital has provided me with invaluable experience in a fast-paced clinical environment with an even more diverse patient population. While many core responsibilities remain the same, this role has enhanced my ability to prioritize effectively and maintain high standards of care under pressure. My exposure to a higher frequency of Code Blue situations has allowed me to develop and confidently apply life-saving techniques in critical situations. Just as in Cardiology, the individualization of patient care is paramount in the Emergency Department, and this new experience is further broadening my understanding of how to tailor care to meet the unique needs of each patient.

I am eager to contribute my skills and enthusiasm to your team and believe that this practicum opportunity would be an invaluable step in my professional growth as a nurse. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Your Name

Student Name

Date

Dear Practicum Coordinator,

I am writing to express my interest in a Senior Nursing Practicum position as a Nursing student at Fitchburg State University. My strongest skills include providing excellent bedside manner, gathering comprehensive patient information, accurately monitoring vital signs, maintaining thorough charting and documentation, and collaborating effectively with a care team. I am eager to further develop these skills and expand my knowledge through this practicum opportunity.

My experience in the healthcare field began in high school at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, where I earned my Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification. During this time, I gained valuable experience in nursing homes and rehabilitation centers, where effective communication was paramount. I regularly communicated with fellow staff, patients, their families, and the broader healthcare team. I also developed skills in mediating stressful situations, educating families on patient status and conditions, and consistently maintaining a calm and positive demeanor.

Following my high school experience, I sought to explore different healthcare settings after my acceptance to college and was fortunate to work with Reliant Medical Group in Internal Medicine. This role allowed me to apply and further refine clinical skills such as vital sign measurement, patient charting and documentation, specimen collection and testing, and discharge planning. Given the frequent need to send referrals to specialists and communicate with other healthcare professionals, strong interpersonal communication skills were essential to ensure patients received the most appropriate and comprehensive care. This position not only reinforced the skills I gained in high school but also allowed me to develop new competencies.

I am enthusiastic about the prospect of continuing my growth and applying my strong passion for learning and helping others within your organization. I am confident that this practicum will provide an invaluable opportunity to thrive in my nursing career. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Student name

Date

Dear Practicum Coordinator,

I am a senior nursing student at Fitchburg State University, seeking a practicum placement for the upcoming Fall semester. Throughout my years as a nursing student and patient care technician, I have developed a strong interest in critical and trauma care, and emergency medical services. I am excited about this future opportunity, as it will allow me to continue to expand my knowledge and understanding of the nursing field.

Two years ago, I started to work at the UMass Memorial Medical Center as a Patient Care Associate in Surgery. This position helped me gain skills in treatment processes, including tracheostomies, G-tubes, colostomies, nephrostomies, and intensive wound care. The intense environment prepared me to be able to provide empathetic and compassionate care to our patients while giving them support and appropriate accommodations throughout their hospital stay. This included providing alternative communication methods with patients such as those with Aphasia, or who are hard of hearing, contributing to a welcoming environment using conversation to build rapport with patients, and overall ensuring their comfort despite the difficult circumstances. Additionally, this position allowed me to gain experience with charting systems and telemetry.

Recently, I decided to explore more of an Intensive Care setting, compared to Medical-Surgical. I immediately became fascinated with providing care for more “complex” patients while working alongside other nurses. Despite the needs of patients changing on a daily basis, I provide consistent care for intubated and sedated patients, patients requiring invasive hemodynamic monitoring, and patients on numerous IV medications and ventilators. I learned to quickly adapt to new situations while providing timely and professional individualized care.

I look forward to continuing to grow my skills and experiences in the nursing field. Thank you for taking the time to review my application, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Student Name

PROFESSIONAL RESUME FOR RN POSITIONS

How is this different than your Practicum Resume?

Your professional resume is different from your practicum resume. In your professional resume you will add more in depth information about your skills and experience, including a more in depth description of your practicum experience and past jobs/volunteering especially if it is health related. Remember, all new RN grads will have completed similar clinical rotations. You should be highlighting what makes you different, and where you personally excel in knowledge/skills/experience. Keep your audience in mind; what do you want your potential employer to learn about you from this document? Now is your opportunity to let them know the amazing skills you would bring to the position.

Describe your experiences

Provide detail on each of your experiences that are related to the position you are applying to. This can include positions that have “transferable skills” like working as an RA and highlighting your leadership and communication skills or crisis management. Under each experience you should have bullet pointed “skills phrases” that:

Starts with an action verb

Highlights what you did and how you did it

Demonstrates the result and skill used

Example:

Action verb	skill used	what and how
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Demonstrated	attention to detail	<i>to initiate interventions such as intravenous, subcutaneous and intramuscular injections.</i>
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What should you include in your Professional Resume?

ESSENTIAL

- **Name and Contact Information:** First and last name, address, city, and state, email, phone
- **Education:** Degree(s), GPA, significant awards, graduation date
- **Licensure and Certifications:** If you have passed the NCLEX, include RN license and number. If you have not yet taken the NCLEX write “Eligible for NCLEX test for RN” and test date if known. Any other relevant certifications.
- **Clinical Practicum:** Include a robust description
- **Related Job Experience:** CNA positions, PCA jobs, etc.
- **Relevant Research:** Ex. honors research thesis/presentation

OPTIONAL

- **Professional Summary:** A professional summary is great for those with more experience (example: LPN to RN program).
- **Academic & Co-curricular Activities**
- **Awards**
- **Skills:** particularly language skills
- **Volunteer Experience:** include especially if relevant
- **Unrelated Job Experience:** Depending on how much nursing/clinical experience you have you may want to add unrelated job experience to show transferable skills

Recent Graduate, BSN
 Fitchburg, MA
 Phone # • email address

Professional Summary

NCLEX eligible BSN graduate with 6 years of clinical experience as a CNA skilled in building a strong rapport with patients through empathy and active listening and strong time management and organization skills from having to assist many patients at the same time through COVID-19 pandemic.

Education

Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA
 Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Cum Laude

May 2022
 GPA: 3.34

Licensure and Certifications

Eligible for NCLEX test for RN
 CPR-BLS, American Heart Association, Basic Life Support
 Certified Nursing Assistant Course

August 2022
 Expiration: 08/24
 Expiration: 08/2022

Experience

Example Medical Center- Boston, MA

March 2022-April 2022

Senior Nursing Practicum: Emergency Department (225 hours)

- Monitored and implemented care for deteriorating conditions of patients all ages
- Performed basic vital signs before procedures and monitored patient stability throughout the hospitalization for optimal results
- Initiated nursing interventions such as intravenous, subcutaneous and intramuscular injections
- Comforted patients and family members during emergent procedures such as intubation
- Worked with patients to educate on the importance of medication adherence and disease management.

Certified Nursing Assistant

February 2021- Present

- Cared for an average of 15 patients per shift, assisting 3-5 nurses and doctors with a rapid influx of admission during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Routinely obtained and charted vital signs including blood sugar levels, as well as placed patients on telemetry monitor and performed EKGs

Sample Health Center - Townsville, MA

July 2018 - August 2020

Certified Nursing Assistant

- Worked with patients with dementia
- Adapted to a surge of COVID-19+ patients during the peak of the pandemic, working overtime and implementing new care procedures to keep patients safe

Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center - City, MA

July 2016 - June 2018

Certified Nursing Assistant

- Assisted up to 20+ patients per shift with basic ADL tasks including transferring patients into beds and wheelchairs using gait belts, mechanical lifts and other tools

Student Sample, BSN
Fitchburg, MA
Phone # • email address

Education, Certifications, and Licensure

Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA
Honors Thesis: Title of Your Impressive Work

May 2022
GPA: 3.90

Eligible for NCLEX Exam for RN
B.L.S., American Heart Association

Scheduled for August 25, 2022
Since 2019

Clinical Experience

UMass Memorial Medical Center-University Campus, Worcester, MA
Clinical Practicum Rotation: MICU (225 hours)

Spring 2022

- Cared for post-operative patients, patients who were sedated and ventilated, and hemodynamically unstable patients
- Demonstrated empathy and care for patients and families while providing excellent patient care
- Started IVs, monitored patients' respiratory ventilation, pulse oximetry, assisted with intubation, and responded to all codes

Greater Fitchburg Community Organizations
Community Health Rotation (?? hours)

Fall 2021

Greater Fitchburg Area Home Care and Chronic Illness Agencies
Chronic Illness Rotation (?? hours)

Fall 2021

UMass Memorial Medical Center-University Campus, Worcester, MA
Pediatric Rotation (?? hours)

Spring 2021

UMass Memorial-Memorial Campus, Worcester, MA
Maternal Newborn Health Rotation (?? hours)

Spring 2021

Saint Vincent Hospital, Worcester, MA
Mental Health Rotation and Med-Surg II Rotation (?? hours)

Fall 2020

Emerson Hospital, Concord, MA
Med-Surg I Rotation (?? hours)

Spring 2020

Employment

UMass Memorial Medical Center-University Campus, Worcester, MA
Patient Care Technician

May 2021 - Present

- Support care providers by ensuring patient needs are met and concerns/questions are addressed.
- Ensure efficiency of care provision by gathering and distributing supplies and documents.

Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA
Nursing Peer Tutor

May 2019 - Present

- Provided group and individual tutoring for nursing courses and Anatomy and Physiology I and II

Language Fluency

Spanish (native speaker)

Volunteer Work

Heywood Hospital Vaccine Clinic, Gardner, MA

March 2021

LPN to BSN Example
Fitchburg, MA
Phone # • email address

Highly skilled nurse with five years of experience providing excellent care to critically ill patients in the fields of geriatrics, vent/trach, and dialysis.

Education

Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA
Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Eligible for NCLEX test for RN

May 2022

August 2022

Mount Wachusett Community College, Gardner, MA
Certification: Practical Nursing
Certified Nursing Assistant and Home Health Aide

December 2016
December 2016
2013

Experience

Selected Nursing Practicum: Telemetry Floor
UMass Memorial HealthAlliance - Clinton Hospital, Leominster Campus

March 2022-April 2022

Monitored cardiac patients by assessing HR,BP,RR and interpreting telemetry strips. Assisted with medication administration. Documented appropriately in EPIC. Notified PCP of changes and requested orders as needed. Accompanied the RN when providing discharge instructions.

Licensed Practical Nurse
Private Home Care, Hardwick, MA

2020-Present

Provide quality care to post stroke patients and assist geriatric patients to remain home. Medication management, VS, ROM exercise, aAdequate hHydration/mMeal preparing, medical appointment scheduling, housekeeping, Transportation with assistive devices to and from PCP appointments, actively respond appropriately to emergency situations upon occurrence.

Licensed Practical Nurse
Federal Medical Center Devens, Devens, MA

2017 –Present

Provide high-quality care in the federal prison system. Triage, evaluate, treat, and educate inmates while working with providers. Responsible for the administration of medication through pill line and insulin line. Assist coworkers with treatment of a variety of patients including long term care, mental health, and dialysis.

Licensed Practical Nurse
Bear Mountain Health Care, Worcester, MA

2020-2021

Prioritized and managed care for critically ill non-verbal and verbal patients. Effectively provided care for 12 patients per shift. Suctioned patients per protocol while assessing and reporting airway status to the respiratory team. Administered medication and feedings via G-tube while assessing for patency. Completed stoma and wound care continuously assessing for infection and notified the physician immediately of new or worsening symptoms.

Home Health Aide/ Certified Nursing Assistant
Epic Health Services, Shrewsbury, MA

2013 – 2017

Assisted patients with ADL's, documented tasks performed through Call Wise.

CRAFTING A PROFESSIONAL COVER LETTER FOR A JOB

What is the Purpose of a Cover Letter?

Always include a cover letter with your application if you are able. It allows you to personalize your application, demonstrate how you are a great match for the position, lets you show your personality and passions, and serves as a writing sample. This can be a powerful tool especially when you are in an applicant pool of candidates with very similar qualifications and experiences. Use your cover letter to show them what you bring to the table and why you are a perfect match for what they are looking for!

Tips

- **Customize your Letter:** Don't just send a generic letter with all your applications where you change the name of the company and position only. Employers can spot a form letter a mile away. This sends the message that you do not really care about the position.
- **Contact Information:** Include the name, correct spelling, and job title of the person to whom you are writing. If it is not stated in the position or you are unable to identify the receiver, address the letter to "Hiring Manager."
- **Do Your Research:** Know something about the company's products, services, mission, or values and reference this in your letter.
- **Keep Your Audience in Mind:** Focus on what YOU can do for the EMPLOYER, not what you will get out of the experience. Describe how your skills and experience make you a great candidate for this position.
- **Use Specific Examples:** Don't just state that you have experience, back it up with evidence! Don't just repeat what you have on your resume, but rather elaborate on two or three key skills/experiences and describe how they directly relate to the position you are applying to.
- **Align with the Job Description:** Read the job description carefully. What is the employer looking for? Are they seeking someone with resilience? Someone who can work in a fast-paced environment? Provide an example of a time when you developed and demonstrated those traits.
- **Write Well and Proofread:** Employers scrutinize the letter for proper grammar, spelling, style, and coherence of thought. If your cover letter is sloppy, they will assume this is a sample of how you work.

Use the Writing Center in the Academic Coaching and Tutoring Center (ACT) to make sure your document is free from mistakes and is well written and organized.
- **Do not overthink this!** It's easy to get really in your head about professional language and trying to sound fancy that you use words that are not reflective of who you really are. You want to be professional and polished, but not sound like a robot.
- **Be brief!** Cover letters should be limited to one page, 3-4 paragraphs at most.

Your Name

Date

Dear Mr. _____, Ms. _____, or Hiring Manager,

Opening Paragraph

In your first paragraph, attract the reader's attention. State your reasons for writing, indicating the position or type of work for which you are applying. State why you are interested in the position/employer/the field. Focus on something that sets this organization apart from similar employers and why that appeals to you. State why you are qualified for the role, i.e., what you can do for them.

Second Paragraph

Explain your background for the employer. Elaborate on which of your experiences have prepared you to meet the specific requirements of the position. Don't just tell them about your skills: show them with specific examples. This could include how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate, clinical rotations, work or volunteer experience. Do not reiterate all the information that is on your resume, but rather focus on a few key points that highlight how your skills/experience match up with what the employer is looking for.

Closing Paragraph

Indicate your desire for a meeting or interview and how they can contact you to follow up. Include your contact information (email and phone number). Thank the reader for their consideration and reiterate your enthusiasm for the position/company

Sincerely,

Your Name

Understanding AI's Role (and Limitations)

- **AI as a Tool, Not a Replacement:** AI can help with brainstorming, structuring, and refining your writing, but it cannot replace your personal experiences and unique voice.
- **Accuracy and Fact-Checking:** Always double-check any information generated by AI. It might hallucinate or provide outdated details.
- **Ethical Considerations:** Avoid plagiarism. Use AI to enhance your own writing, not to create content that you claim as your own.

Utilizing AI for Specific Cover Letter Aspects

Brainstorming and Content Generation:

- **Input:** Provide the AI with the job description, your resume, and key skills you want to highlight.

Prompt Examples:

- “Generate a list of keywords relevant to a registered nurse position in a cardiac care unit.”
- “Based on this job description, what are the top 3 skills a nurse should emphasize?”
- “Give me examples of how a nursing student could describe their clinical experience in a cover letter.”

Structuring and Formatting:

- **Input:** Ask the AI to create a basic cover letter outline, including an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion.

Prompt Examples:

- “Create a cover letter template for a new graduate nurse applying to a hospital residency program.”
- “Suggest a structure for a cover letter that highlights both clinical skills and interpersonal abilities.”

Refining Language and Tone:

- **Input:** Paste your draft into the AI and ask it to improve the grammar, clarity, and tone.

Prompt Examples:

- “Make this paragraph more concise and professional.”
- “Suggest stronger action verbs to describe my clinical experiences.”
- “Adjust the tone of this paragraph to be more enthusiastic and confident.”

Tailoring to Specific Jobs:

- **Input:** Paste the job description and your basic cover letter into the AI. Ask it to find key phrases from the job description and make sure that those concepts are addressed within the cover letter.

Prompt Examples:

- “Analyze this job description and suggest specific ways to tailor my cover letter to this position.”
- “Find keywords from this job description and ensure they are included in my cover letter.”

Important Considerations:

- **Specificity is Key:** The more specific your prompts, the better the AI's output will be.
- **Maintain Your Voice:** Don't let AI write the entire letter for you. Use it as a tool to enhance your own writing.
- **Focus on Achievements:** Highlight your accomplishments and how they align with the job requirements.
- **Personalize and Authenticate:** Add your unique voice and personalize the letter to the specific job and organization.
- **Proofread Carefully:** Double-check for any errors or inconsistencies.
- **Follow Instructions:** Adhere to any specific instructions provided in the job posting.
- **Seek Feedback:** Ask a professor, mentor, or career advisor to review your cover letter.

Utilizing AI for Interview Preparation

- **Practice Questions and Answers:** AI can generate potential interview questions and help you refine your responses.
- **Behavioral Question Analysis:** AI can help you understand the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) and craft compelling stories.
- **Company and Industry Research:** AI can quickly gather information about the organization and current trends in nursing.
- **Mock Interview Scenarios:** Some AI tools can simulate interview scenarios and provide feedback.
- **Keyword Optimization:** AI can help you identify keywords from the job description and incorporate them into your answers.

Specific AI Applications for Interview Preparation:

Generating Potential Interview Questions:

- **Input:** Provide the job description, your resume, and the type of nursing position.

Prompt Examples:

- “Generate a list of common interview questions for a new graduate nurse in an emergency department.”
- “What are behavioral interview questions related to teamwork in a nursing setting?”
- “Create questions related to patient safety for a nurse manager interview.”

Crafting STAR Method Responses:

- **Input:** Describe a specific clinical experience or work situation.

Prompt Examples:

- “Help me structure a STAR method response for a time when I had to handle a difficult patient situation.”
- “Give me an example of a STAR response for a time I demonstrated leadership in a clinical setting.”
- “How can I improve this STAR response to emphasize my critical thinking skills?”

Researching the Organization and Industry:

- **Input:** Provide the name of the hospital or healthcare organization.

Prompt Examples:

- “Provide recent news and information about [Hospital Name]’s patient care initiatives.”
- “What are the current trends and challenges in the field of [Specialty] nursing?”
- “What is [Hospital Name]’s mission and values?”

Analyzing and Improving Your Answers:

- **Input:** Paste your practice answers into the AI.

Prompt Examples:

- “Evaluate this answer and suggest ways to make it more concise and impactful.”
- “Identify any weaknesses in this answer and suggest improvements.”
- “Make sure this answer uses keywords from the job description.”

Keyword Optimization:

- **Input:** Paste the job description.

Prompt Examples:

- “What are the main keywords in this job description?”
- “How can I incorporate these keywords into my interview answers?”

Important Considerations:

- **Authenticity is Key:** While AI can help you refine your answers, ensure they reflect your genuine experiences and personality.
- **Practice Aloud:** Practice speaking your answers aloud, as this will help you become more comfortable and confident.
- **Nonverbal Communication:** Remember that nonverbal communication is crucial in interviews. Practice maintaining eye contact, good posture, and a positive demeanor.
- **Tailor Your Answers:** Customize your answers to the specific job and organization.
- **Don’t rely solely on AI:** AI is a tool to improve your preparation, but human interaction and practice are still essential.

There are many opportunities in nursing and you will be strongly recruited, but not all positions and organizations will be a good fit for you personally. Consider the following when deciding between different organizations and positions. Do your research before you apply, but you can also use your interview as an opportunity to assess whether this role or organization is the right fit for you.

When you research your potential employer consider the following:

- Who are they?
- What is the company culture like?
- What does the organization struggle with?
- What qualities are they looking for?

Research Online

Social platforms give a glimpse into an organization's culture or values:

- Review their Website including their mission statement and values.
- Check out social media posts (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc.).
- Check out Google, do they have any google ratings? Have they been in the news lately, and for what?
- Look the company up on LinkedIn. Do you know someone who works there? Consider reaching out to ask about their experience.

Questions to consider asking in an interview:

- What type of lift equipment is used on the floor/unit?
- What supports are available to new grads if the agency does not have a new grad program?
- What is the culture of the agency and floor/unit?
- Do they offer an opportunity to shadow or observe before a candidate accepts a position?
- What is the hospital/agency's accreditation status?
- How is the safety of the staff addressed?
- What are the opportunities for professional development/skill development?

Remember, as you go through the application and interview process, you are not alone. Talk to your advisor or trusted faculty members and individuals you may know in the field. Also, Career Services and Advising is here to support you. Reach out to us if you would like to discuss the job search process, interview prep, do a mock interview, or discuss comparing offers and salary negotiation.

Email careercenter@fitchburgstate.edu or 978-665-4925.



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