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CHEM 496
Assignment #8: Resume, Cover Letter (or Letter of Inquiry) & Professional Email

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TODAY - Tuesday, October 26 (all info below will be in the next Newsletter):
- **Seminar this week:** Madison and Emily will introduce alumna Ariane Borges
- **Attendance and assignment due dates**
- **Key Past Assignments:** List of skills; LinkedIn Profile; Personal Statement/Elevator Speech
- **Archive:** Microsoft Teams folders (portfolio of course work)
- **Overview for Assignment #8:** Elements of a Professional Email; Cover Letter/Letter of Inquiry; Resume (due Sunday, October 31).
- **Class – November 2:** No class - You will be prompted to review my comments on previous assignments.
- **Class – November 9:** Asking for recommendations; diversity/inclusion statement for resume; Responding to an interview request.
- **Class – November 16:** Preparing for an interview; answering interview questions
- **Class – November 23:** No class (Thanksgiving week)
- **Class – November 30:** Responding to a job offer; calculating a "fair" salary

Examples:

1-Cover Letter-industry	6-Email Inquiry-grad research	1-Resume example
2-Cover Letter-teaching	7-Email Inquiry-research position	2-Resume example
3-Cover Letter-teaching	8-Email Inquiry-grad program	3-Resume example
4-Cover Letter-industry		4-Resume example
5-Cover Letter-industry		

Professional email etiquette (https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/email-etiquette-tips-rules):
- Short, descriptive Subject Line
- Professional greeting
- Body text that briefly explains purpose of email
- Call out attachments
- Formal sign-off - Develop an email signature with your name, email, phone, position(s)
- Practice good grammar (proofread!) and use standard fonts and formatting
- Avoid distracting backgrounds

Cover Letter or Letter of Inquiry. Important **tools** to use when applying for a job or requesting information (can also be integrated into your LinkedIn profile page).
NOTE: A Cover Letter is a formal letter. A "Letter of Inquiry" is typically an email.

Purpose:
- **Introduction** to the prospective employer or research advisor;
- Highlights your **enthusiasm** for the position;
- Describes your **specific skills and qualifications** for the job or internship or research group, and clearly explains why you are a good fit;
- Confirms your **availability/intent** to start a new position
- Tailor your cover letter/letter of inquiry to fit each position. None will be exactly the same, though a lot of content will be similar in each.

Nuts and Bolts:
- Cover letter is formal and will be uploaded (with your resume) as a PDF. The letter of inquiry will be in email format.
- Limit the cover letter to 1-2 pages, unless applying to academic faculty, teaching or research positions.
- Limit the letter of inquiry to 200-300 words.
- Use the same font and formatting as you use in your resume.

- **Don't summarize your resume.** Focus on your enthusiasm for the job, excitement about working with that organization, highlight your unique skills that make you qualified for the position and a good fit for the employer. Quantify when possible.
- Don't overuse adjectives or superlatives; don't exaggerate.
- Use formal, professional language; no abbreviations.
- Address your cover letter/letter of inquiry to a specific person or the hiring manager whenever possible. If you don't know their name, use one of the following examples:
  - "Dear Hiring Manager,"
  - "Dear [insert department here] Hiring Team,"
  - "Dear Recruiter, "
  - "Dear Search Committee Chair and Committee Members:" (teaching positions)
  - "To Whom It May Concern: "
- Getting started:
  - "I am excited to apply for the xxxxxx position that was advertised in yyyyyy".
  - "I am excited to apply to the graduate program in xxxxx at xxxxx University, and am very interested in learning more about the xxxxxx research in your group."

Wrapping up:
- Check for typos, proper grammar and accuracy.
- Use spellcheck, but do not rely on it to catch all errors.
- Have multiple people review your first draft (i.e., me!).
- When applying online and limited to uploading one document, create a single document that includes both your resume and cover letter.
- Although your resume is not required with a letter of inquiry, I suggest including it anyway, "I have included my resume as an attachment to this email."

Resume - Background Information. My experience with the students in CHEM 496 is that there are three groups: (1) several of you already have a "polished" resume and experience writing professional cover letters and email; (2) there is a group with a draft resume' and (3) about a third of you do not yet a resume on paper. This exercise is for everyone, and is a chance to have a fine-tuned resume ready to go. This is also where we make sure that you well aware of the skills you have developed, and how you can leverage those skills to make yourself into a strong candidate for the next step of your career.

In this description, I will use the terms "job" and "employee", that should be broadly interpreted based on the career path you are pursuing (teaching, industry, public service, graduate or professional school, etc.)

Resume (https://icc.ucdavis.edu/materials/resume/resumecv): Resume is French for "summary". Your resume presents a concise picture of your skills and qualifications for a **specific position**. One or two pages as determined by your years of experience. Usually required if you are applying for an entry-level industry position (private or public sector).

Designing your Resume - You need to change your perspective from student to professional:
- Tailored for the specific job/company you are applying to;
- Should represent you as the best qualified candidate;
- Honest representation of your qualifications;
- Are used to get you an interview;
- Do not usually include personal interests;
- See the two examples attached to my email.
- Avoid **Profile Plagiarism!** Give an honest representation of your skills and qualifications!

General Notes Based on Class Assignments:
- Include a "Statement of Purpose" and consider a high quality **professional** headshot. Take a look at the headshot photos on the seminar posters on the bulletin board outside the chemistry office.

- Your Skill Set(s). Consider listing all of your skills, but breaking them up into categories based on the position you are applying for.
  - You want to spotlight the skills that are most relevant to the position, but also bring in other skills that will increase your value as an employee.
  - Make sure that these are "true skills" that you are competent in!
  - Under the category that may include "research skills", be sure to include internships and class projects. There are over-lapping skills: communication, writing, problem solving, team work, etc.
  - Be sure to include potential "leadership skills"
  - Don't forget e-communication skills (Zoom, Blackboard, Microsoft Teams, etc.)
- Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Respect: To be discussed in class on November 9.
- References: "References available upon request".
- Under education: "The Bridgewater State University BSc degree in chemistry is certified by the American Chemical Society"

The assignment will be described in the next Newsletter. I will include URL links to examples of cover letters, letters of inquiry, and resumes.

Assignment #8: Due Sunday, October 31 at 5:00 PM. There will be two groups for this assignment, those of you **drafting** a Cover Letter and Resume, and those **drafting** a letter or inquiry (email) with your resume:

Group #1: Cover Letter and Resume. You will send me TWO MS Word documents (not PDF) as attachments to a professionally written email. I expect these documents to be in the same font (such as Arial or Times New Roman), 12 point, one inch margins.

Group #2: Letter of Inquiry (email) and Resume. You will send me ONE MS Word document (not PDF) as an attachment to a professionally written email where you will either: Ask for graduate/professional program information, or state your intent to apply to a graduate program and express your interest in joining a faculty research group. I expect these documents to be in the same font (such as Arial or Times New Roman), 12 point, one inch margins.

Most of you will address your email/document to me (Dr. Edward Brush). Depending on your career path, my role will be either:
1) Professional chemist who is the Director of Research or Division Head for the job opening that you are applying for, or
2) Professional chemist who is chairing the committee reviewing applications for admission to graduate or professional school, or
3) Professional chemist who's research group you are interested in joining.

Some of you will be in the process of applying or making inquiries, and will already have the name of a specific person.