

Career Planning Guide

2024–2025



ROANOKE
COLLEGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome

All About PLACE.....	3
Meet the Staff.....	4

Develop Your Plan

Career Exploration.....	5
NACE Competencies.....	6
CliftonStrengths for the Job.....	8
The Four Year Guide.....	10

Build Your Professional Toolbox

Resume Checklist.....	12
Action Verbs For Your Resume.....	13
Sample Resumes.....	17
Tips for Federal Government Applications.....	25
Cover Letter Checklist.....	26
Cover Letter Overview.....	27
Sample Cover Letters.....	28
References and Letters of Recommendation.....	31
ChatGPT, AI, and Career Exploration.....	32

Connect with Resources

Job Search Strategies.....	34
Networking.....	35
LinkedIn.....	36
Handshake.....	38
Identity in Your Career Search.....	39

Get Hired

Interviewing.....	42
Common Interview Questions.....	44
Dressing for an Interview.....	45
Professional Communication.....	46
Accepting an Offer and Negotiation.....	47

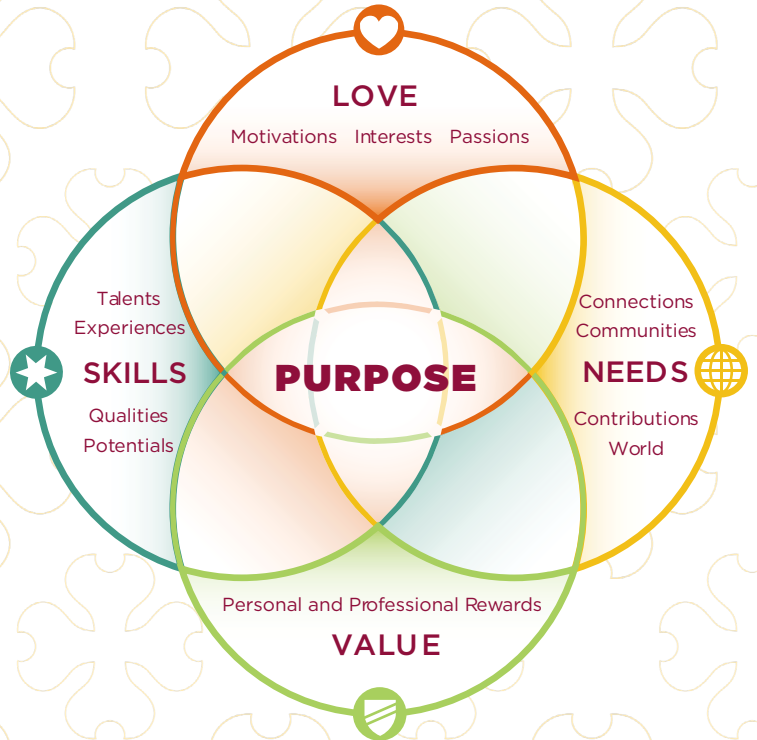
Get Accepted

Considering Graduate School?.....	48
Applying for Graduate School?.....	49

Where Alumni are Working



PLACE is the on-campus center dedicated to helping students find their place through **Purpose, Life And Career Exploration.**



CONNECTION TO EXPERIENCES

Guidance on the best opportunities for you to explore your interests and passions on campus and off.

DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT

Support developing impressive resumes, professional documents, and winning job/grad school applications.

ALUMNI ACCESS

Access to our 15,000-strong alumni network for advice and career connections through our Maroon Mentors program.

PROFESSIONAL COACHING






Individual career, internship and interview coaching, counseling, and planning.

ONE-ON-ONE ADVISING

Career and life counseling guiding you in your pursuit of purpose on campus and beyond.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Assistance searching for and applying to graduate school or licensure and training programs.

-  roanoke.edu/place
-  place@roanoke.edu
-  [@place_at_roanokecollege](https://www.instagram.com/place_at_roanokecollege)
-  [@place.roanokecollege](https://www.facebook.com/place.roanokecollege)
-  <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/5097023/>



MEET THE STAFF



Meghan Jester

Director of Career Exploration

jester@roanoke.edu [LinkedIn](#)

Meghan develops programming for students as they identify career and life trajectories aligned with their strengths and sense of purpose. She partners with faculty and supports professional development for students to ensure readiness for meaningful careers through participation in experiential learning, internships, student employment, and other opportunities. She works with both undergraduate and graduate students to prepare for a successful launch from Roanoke College.



Jonathan Lee

Director of Strategic Partnerships for Students & Alumni Success

jelee@roanoke.edu [LinkedIn](#)

Jonathan finds ways for our alumni to enrich the experiences of our students, whether through our mentoring program (Maroon Mentors), special guest presentations, career fairs, or other avenues. He assists individual seniors and recent graduates by helping them develop professional networks. Additionally, Jonathan serves as a liaison with companies and organizations who are looking to hire Maroons for employment and for internships.



Kelly Dalaski

Director of Student Orientation & Transitions

dalaski@roanoke.edu [LinkedIn](#)

Kelly focuses on organizing and implementing a freshman orientation program designed to engage students as community members during their first days as college students. Kelly's focus on providing career development to freshman and sophomores includes career advising, extensive program planning, and easing the college transition. Additionally, Kelly works with programs, such as Maroon Mentors, where she advises sophomore students who are paired with alumni in the career field of their interest.



Nicole Ramsey

Asst. Director of Career Development and Professional Transitions

ramsey@roanoke.edu [LinkedIn](#)

Nicole utilizes her vast industry experience, and tenure as a university Career Coach, to equip Maroons for amazing careers through preparation, critical skill development, and experiential learning opportunities.



Fiona Brown

Student Success Coordinator

fbrown@roanoke.edu [LinkedIn](#)

Fiona serves as a first point of contact for students and visitors. She provides administrative support for daily operations, career-focused programming, and student employment. Fiona is passionate about helping students develop into confident job-seekers and employees and looks forward to promoting the success of students at Roanoke College.

PLACE

Fowler Alumni House, 202 High St., Salem, VA
Office of Career Services, 221 College Lane, Salem, VA 24153
Phone: (540) 375-2303 | Fax: (540) 375-2092
place@roanoke.edu



CAREER EXPLORATION

Career exploration is an active, on-going, and multifaceted process to help you identify your purposeful life and opportunities for a fulfilling and meaningful career. By starting early, the more likely you will be successful in attaining your goals by graduation. You can learn best by doing, but there are also online resources and assessments to support your exploration.

Identify your strengths, interests, skills, motivations, and work values.

There are many ways to identify these factors – you may reflect on the following questions to see how they point to strengths and interests:

- What makes you, you?
- What gets you excited about the day?
- Complete CliftonStrengths and read about your strengths in the workplace.
- Think about experiences you've had, either inside or outside of the classroom, where you felt successful, proud, and/or accomplished.
- Identify classes, sports, work, or volunteer experiences you've looked forward to attending. What was your overall goal for participating? How did you contribute to the overall experience? What did you like most about it? What was the outcome or impact it had on you or others?
- Ask for feedback from others to provide different perspectives than what you see within yourself:
 - If you had to describe me using three words, what would you say?
 - What personality traits do you consider to be my greatest strengths?
 - What are my most transferable and marketable skills?
 - What kind of work environment do you think best suits me?
- Complete [O*Net](#) Interest Profiler.
- Schedule an appointment with PLACE to go over your results.

Explore what you can do with different majors.

Learn more about Roanoke College majors and explore what you can do with them. Check out the "[What Can I Do With This Major](#)" resource which includes over 100 major profiles with information on common career paths.

- Identify 3 majors that interest you.
- Save the three checksheets.
- Consider the optional classes within each major that are of interest to you.

Research occupations.

Research job duties, tasks, education requirements, salary, and job outlook on [O*Net](#) and [Occupational Outlook](#) Handbook. Identify 2-3 job titles, level of education required, outlook/growth, average salary, and what interests you about the roles.

Get Experience.

There is nothing better than experience when exploring careers – first you do, then you know! There are several ways to get experiences.

- Complete an internship
- Work on-campus – positions are posted on Handshake for on-campus employment
- Volunteer or complete an alternative break
- Get involved in on-campus organizations
- Job shadow – get connected with Maroon Mentors
- Participate in undergraduate research

Look at sample job postings.

Job listings show you what a job entails and what employers require of qualified applicants. Use [Handshake](#), [LinkedIn](#), [indeed.com](#), etc. to find opportunities you may be interested in. Consider the title, employer, requirements you meet or don't meet, and why you may be interested in the roles.

Ask the experts.

- Get advice from faculty and other students in academic departments you are considering.
- Arrange informational interviews with professionals in occupations of interest. Find connections through Maroon Mentors, LinkedIn, and your personal network.
- Attend campus networking events, career fairs, employer, and other information sessions. Look for events on Handshake.

* Adapted from Western Oregon University's Career Guide.

NACE COMPETENCIES

Top Skills Employers Seek*

Skill	Description	Sample Behaviors
Career & Self-Development	Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show an awareness of your own strengths and areas for development. • Identify areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback. • Develop plans and goals for one's future career. • Professionally advocate for oneself and others. • Display curiosity; seek out opportunities to learn. • Assume duties or positions that will help one progress professionally. • Establish, maintain, and/or leverage relationships with people who can help one professionally. • Seek and embrace development opportunities. • Voluntarily participate in further education, training, or other events to support one's career.
Communication	Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of and demonstrate verbal, written, and non-verbal/body language, abilities. • Employ active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills. • Communicate in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand. • Frame communication with respect to diversity of learning styles, varied individual communication abilities, and cultural differences. • Ask appropriate questions for specific information from supervisors, specialists, and others. • Promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance with assigned tasks.
Critical Thinking	Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning, and judgment. • Gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem. • Proactively anticipate needs and prioritize action steps. • Accurately summarize and interpret data with an awareness of personal biases that may impact outcomes. • Effectively communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders. • Multi-task well in a fast-paced environment.
Equity & Inclusion	Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-oppressive practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism and inequity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit and use feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make inclusive and equity-minded decisions. • Actively contribute to inclusive and equitable practices that influence individual and systemic change. • Advocate for inclusion, equitable practices, justice, and empowerment for historically marginalized communities. • Seek global cross-cultural interactions and experiences that enhance one's understanding of people from different demographic groups and that lead to personal growth. • Keep an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking. • Identify resources and eliminate barriers resulting from individual and systemic racism, inequities, and biases • Demonstrate flexibility by adapting to diverse environments. • Address systems of privilege that limit opportunities for members of historically marginalized communities.

* Adapted from Rio Salado College: A Maricopa Community College and : <https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/>

NACE COMPETENCIES

Top Skills Employers Seek*

Skill	Description	Sample Behaviors
Leadership	Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspire, persuade, and motivate self and others under a shared vision. • Seek out and leverage diverse resources and feedback from others to inform direction. • Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods. • Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude. • Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust. • Plan, initiate, manage, complete, and evaluate projects.
Professionalism	Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act equitably with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization. • Maintain a positive personal brand in alignment with organizational and personal career values. • Be present and prepared. • Demonstrate dependability (e.g., report consistently for work or meetings). • Prioritize and complete tasks to accomplish organizational goals. • Consistently meet or exceed goals and expectations. • Have an attention to detail, resulting in few if any errors in their work. • Show a high level of dedication toward doing a good job.
Teamwork	Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting. • Effectively manage conflict, interact with and respect diverse personalities, and meet ambiguity with resilience. • Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities and deliverables. • Employ personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to complement those of others. • Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile. • Collaborate with others to achieve common goals. • Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.
Technology	Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate change and be open to learning new technologies. • Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity of their work. • Identify appropriate technology for completing specific tasks. • Manage technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making. • Quickly adapt to new or unfamiliar technologies. • Manipulate information, construct ideas, and use technology to achieve strategic goals.

* Adapted from Rio Salado College: A Maricopa Community College and : <https://www.naceweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/>

STRENGTHS FOR THE JOB

[CliftonStrengths](#) is an assessment tool that helps individuals identify their natural talents so they can build on them and develop them into strengths. One of Roanoke College's core values is the success of our students. CliftonStrengths is a powerful tool to help individuals find their own path to personal success. You can and should use those strengths to your advantage as you consider majors, minors, and career paths. See how your top strengths can be leveraged to find a position that is a good fit!

After you complete the assessment that identifies your top 5 (out of 34) strengths, spend some time reflecting on what they mean. Familiarize yourself with your strengths, reading the descriptions provided by Gallup, and reflect on how they manifest in your life.

Strengths can help guide you in your search for post-graduate opportunity. Check out careers that may be a good fit based on your strengths.

Strength	<i>Search for careers that...</i>
Achiever	Provide opportunity to excel, challenge you, and allow for control over your workflow and productivity
Activator	Have opportunity for leadership roles quickly and short-term projects you can initiate
Adaptability	Emphasize flexibility and offer a variety of work, tasks, and responsibilities
Analytical	Require research, analysis, and data collection; a career that emphasizes investigation and facts
Arranger	Allow you to put information together (in a plan or document, etc.) or grouping people together to increase productivity
Belief	Align with your values since they will tie to your career happiness; you may be drawn to helping professions
Command	Offer leadership opportunities and chance to be diplomatic; avoid those where you will have to follow
Communication	Provide lots of opportunities to talk and form connections with other people; positions with public speaking, customer service or serving as a spokesperson may be ideal
Competition	Challenge you regularly and your accomplishments are objectively measured; consider competition individual or in a team
Connectedness	Match your values and provide opportunity to support others
Consistency	Require a clear set of regulations; leadership positions can be of interest because of your strong value in treating others fairly
Context	Involve investigating information and exploring previous practices; consider roles where you can build on what has been done
Deliberative	Require careful planning and thinking before jumping into action; careers with research and analysis may be a good fit for you
Developer	Allow you to interact with people and support their success; a field where interpersonal relationships are important may be of interest to you
Discipline	Encourage you to maintain order for self and others; work that requires regular follow-through will be ideal
Empathy	Involve service; your ability to listen, provide advice, and show compassion will be an asset to those needing resources and understanding
Focus	Have clear expectations and few distractions; you work well with deadlines and strong purpose for long-term projects

STRENGTHS FOR THE JOB

Strength	<i>Search for careers that...</i>
Futuristic	Allow you to plan and strategize new ideas that are innovative now and in the future
Harmony	Provide opportunities for you to mediate and use your practical problem-solving skills
Ideation	Encourage freedom to express ideas and creativity; look for opportunities where your ideas are valued
Includer	Offer the opportunity for you to be a part of or lead a team; you may also enjoy working with those who often feel excluded
Individualization	Allow you to make an individual impact, help others realize and carry out their full potential
Input	Surround you with new knowledge and shares opportunity to develop creative solutions to challenges
Intellection	Collaboration of ideas with colleagues is prioritized and in-depth discussions encouraged
Learner	Offer regular opportunities for learning opportunities to remain engaged in your work
Maximizer	Allow you to improve yourself and others; building on already existing efficiencies on your team
Positivity	Provide opportunities for encouragement of others; team environments will be ideal
Relator	Allow you to work closely with others and develop long-term relationships
Responsibility	Increase in responsibility during your tenure; you'll succeed in situations where outcome and process are both celebrated
Restorative	Encourage creative solutions to challenges; where mistakes are valued as opportunities for improvement
Self-Assurance	Offer a constant challenge for your engagement; your confidence can be effective in positions of leadership
Significance	Acknowledge your hard work, where you can make a difference, and impact the organization
Strategic	Allow you to use logic and understanding to problem solve; you may interested in careers in consulting
Woo	Offer opportunity to connect with other people and form relationships

*Source for Material 'In the Job Search' and 'In the Interview' sections created by the Missouri's University Career Center, University of Missouri, 2011. "In the New Position" section created by Stacy Ballinger, Director, Center for Calling & Career, Lee University. '3 Ways to Utilize Your Strengths in the Job Search' by Christina Hernandez at the University of Florida. Talent themes copy righted by Gallup, Inc.

THE FOUR YEAR GUIDE

to Building Your Resume

YEAR

1

Ask Questions

- Consider double majors, minors, or concentrations – Talk with faculty, alumni, and advisors about possible career paths for your interests
- Complete Gallup CliftonStrengths Assessment
- Draft your first resume with your high school experiences to edit and expand upon
- Create your Handshake and LinkedIn profiles
- Explore student employment opportunities on campus
- Begin to explore and apply for summer internships and other opportunities on Handshake – Learn about the resources available at PLACE to support you in your journey
- Explore and begin undergraduate research, on your own, or with a professor
- Get to know professors and other advisors in class and during office hours
- Concentrate on your studies and earn good grades – Use the resources on campus to identify tips for studying, time management, and other helpful success strategies
- Look at skills and competencies employers prefer and think about how you will develop them before graduation

YEAR

2

Expand Resources

- Continue or become involved in on-campus organizations and work toward leadership roles
- Look into study abroad program options in depth: semester, May term, or summer opportunities – Apply for scholarships and experiences for the following year
- Declare a major
- Update your resume and remove high school activities – Have it critiqued by an advisor at PLACE
- Start to build your professional network, connect with alumni through Meet a Maroon, and participate in Maroon Mentors
- Get an on-campus job, do research, informational interviews or job shadowing for at least 3 careers
- Update your LinkedIn and Handshake profiles
- Continue or start undergraduate research and seek publication or presentation opportunities
- Participate in campus workshops and fairs that are right for you and where you're at in your planning
- Continue to develop relationships with your advisor and professors who can write recommendations for you – Begin to collect recommendations from previous employers
- Subscribe to professional journals in your field

THE FOUR YEAR GUIDE

to Building Your Resume

YEAR

3

Gain Experience

- Complete an internship, undergraduate research, or on-campus job
- Participate in fairs, workshops and events that apply to you
- Expand your network on campus and shadow professionals in the field you are interested in pursuing
- Explore graduate school options and prepare for any entrance exams required (ie. GRE, LSAT, MCAT, GMAT, and others)
- Attend career and internship fairs to search for opportunities and practice engaging with employers
- Continue resume development and update with college experiences – Seek resume reviews from advisors
- Practice interviewing, cover-letter writing, and attend other job-search workshops
- Review and update LinkedIn and Handshake profiles
- Meet with academic advisor to confirm degree progress
- Seek leadership opportunities in campus organizations and service work
- Review your progress in developing career competencies
- Begin building a professional wardrobe
- Complete an internship, undergraduate research, or on-campus job
- Participate in fairs, workshops and events that apply to you
- Expand your network on campus and shadow professionals in the field you are interested in pursuing
- Explore graduate school options and prepare for any entrance exams required (ie. GRE, LSAT, MCAT, GMAT, and others)
- Attend career and internship fairs to search for opportunities and practice engaging with employers
- Continue resume development and update with college experiences – Seek resume reviews from advisors
- Practice interviewing, cover-letter writing, and attend other job-search workshops
- Review and update LinkedIn and Handshake profiles
- Meet with academic advisor to confirm degree progress
- Seek leadership opportunities in campus organizations and service work
- Review your progress in developing career competencies
- Begin building a professional wardrobe

YEAR

4

Transition to Success

- Attend job fairs, power hours, and other career events
- Continue to expand your professional network
- Finish taking any graduate school exams – Apply for graduate and professional schools or jobs that fit your interest, skills, and career goals – Follow up on applications and keep a record on the status of each
- Finish up any undergraduate research and seek publication and presentation opportunities
- Draft a cover letter for job postings you may apply for – Have it critiqued
- Attend job fairs with a focus on full-time employment and participate in on-campus interviews
- Polish your resume by seeking feedback from advisors to ensure inclusion of all experiences
- Develop a list of prospective organizations you're interested in pursuing
- Gather information on realistic salary expectations
- Practice and prepare for interviews – schedule a mock interview with PLACE
- Update LinkedIn and Handshake profiles and use for job search
- Complete First Destination Survey for PLACE

RESUME CHECKLIST

What is a resume? A resume is a one-page, snapshot of your skills and experiences that align with the job you want. A job description can guide you when crafting your document to ensure the resume is consistent with the skills needed.

Overall Format

- One page in length for internships and entry-level positions.
- An easy-to-read font (like Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri).
- Use no more than 3 font sizes; minimum font size is 10, max is 16 (for headers).
- Consistency is the most important.
 - Spacing and margins should be consistent throughout; .5" – minimum margins on all sides
 - Content within each section should be formatted consistently (check punctuation, dashes, periods, etc.)
- Use formatting like Italics, bolding, and underlining intentionally to organize and emphasize information.
- Clearly label each section and list experiences in reverse chronological order (most recent experiences first).
- Save your final version as a PDF with your first and last name in the file name.
- Tailor your resume to the specific position you're applying to – pull keywords from the actual job description.
- Update your resume after each new experience while you remember what you did!

CHECK OUT
additional resume
resources online.



Resume Sections

- Name and contact information – include an email you regularly check and phone number. You may choose to include an address (city and state). Don't label obvious facts, such as "phone" or "email".
- For internships and your first job, your first section should be education.
 - Your specific degree should be first (ie. Bachelor of Arts with a major in History)
 - List the school as Roanoke College
 - Dates: include the month and year of graduation – if unsure, list as "anticipated or expected May 202x"
- Related experiences: the section includes experiences most relevant to the opportunity you're applying to.
- Other sections (choose what best suits your experiences not included in relevant experience) and may include skills, research, volunteer experience, membership in clubs/organizations, certifications, leadership, etc.
- Sections not to include:
 - References: these should be on a separate document or uploaded to an application.
 - A professional summary/objective: these are not needed for an undergraduate or early professional resume.
 - A skills section with soft skills – provide those details in the description. It is more effective to demonstrate how you are a good communicator than just to say "Communication".

Describe Your Experience

- Include position title, organization or employer name, city/state, dates (month/year).
- Use bulleted statements, instead of complete sentences, that start with a strong, skills-based action verb.
- Save the space and avoid using personal pronouns (ie. I, me, my, we, etc.)
- Pay attention to verb tense – use present tense, active verbs for on-going experiences (ie. teach, not teaching). Completed experiences should include past tense verbs.
- For each bullet – Action verb + what you did/significance + descriptive results/outcome. Listing your job duties isn't enough.
 - Think of these as accomplishment statements. Instead of "Led daily activities" as a camp counselor, a stronger, professional statement might say "Led a group of five experienced counselors and 56 campers between the ages of 8-12 over four weeks through recreational and social activities"
- Avoid using "Responsible for" or "Duties included", which is passive voice.
- Give specific results and quantify when you can with numbers, percentages, or dollar amounts.

**Get your final document
reviewed by an expert at PLACE.**

Schedule an appointment on Handshake at
roanoke.joinhandshake.com/login.



ACTION VERBS for Resumes

Organized by Accomplishment

You Led a Project

Chaired	Controlled	Coordinated	Executed
Headed	Operated	Orchestrated	Organized
Oversaw	Planned	Produced	Programmed

You Envisioned and Brought a Project to Life

Administered	Built	Charted	Created
Designed	Developed	Devised	Founded
Engineered	Established	Formalized	Formed
Formulated	Implemented	Incorporated	Initiated
Instituted	Introduced	Launched	Pioneered
Spearheaded			

You Saved the Company Time or Money

Conserved	Consolidated	Decreased	Deducted
Diagnosed	Lessened	Reconciled	Reduced
Yielded			

You Increased Efficiency, Sales, Revenue, or Customer Satisfaction

Accelerated	Achieved	Advanced	Amplified
Boosted	Capitalized	Delivered	Enhanced
Expanded	Expedited	Furthered	Gained
Generated	Improved	Lifted	Maximized
Outpaced	Stimulated	Sustained	

You Changed or Improved Something

Centralized	Clarified	Converted	Customized
Influenced	Integrated	Merged	Modified
Overhauled	Redesigned	Refined	Refocused
Rehabilitated	Remodeled	Reorganized	Replaced
Restructured	Revamped	Revitalized	Simplified
Standardized	Streamlined	Strengthened	Updated
Upgraded	Transformed		

You Managed a Team

Aligned	Cultivated	Directed	Enabled
Facilitated	Fostered	Guided	Hired
Inspired	Mentored	Mobilized	Motivated
Recruited	Regulated	Shaped	Supervised
Taught	Trained	United	

ACTION VERBS for Resumes

Organized by Accomplishment

You Brought in Partners, Funding, or Resources

Acquired	Forged	Navigated	Negotiated
Partnered	Secured		

You Supported Customers

Advised	Advocated	Arbitrated	Coached
Consulted	Educated	Fielded	Informed
Resolved			

You Were a Research Machine

Analyzed	Assembled	Assessed	Audited
Calculated	Discovered	Evaluated	Examined
Explored	Forecasted	Identified	Interpreted
Investigated	Mapped	Measured	Qualified
Quantified	Surveyed	Tested	Tracked

You Wrote or Communicated

Authored	Briefed	Campaigned	Co-authored
Composed	Conveyed	Convinced	Corresponded
Counseled	Critiqued	Defined	Documented
Edited	Illustrated	Lobbied	Persuaded
Promoted	Publicized	Reviewed	

You Oversaw or Regulated

Authorized	Blocked	Delegated	Dispatched
Enforced	Ensured	Inspected	Itemized
Monitored	Screened	Scrutinized	Verified

You Achieved Something

Attained	Awarded	Completed	Demonstrated
Earned	Exceeded	Outperformed	Reached
Showcased	Succeeded	Surpassed	Targeted

ACTION VERBS for Resumes

Organized by Skill

Management/ Leadership Skills

administered
analyzed
appointed
approved
assigned
attained
authorized
chaired
considered
consolidated
contracted
controlled
converted
coordinated
decided
delegated
developed
directed
eliminated
emphasized
enforced
enhanced
established
executed
generated
handled
headed
hired
hosted
improved
incorporated
increased
initiated
inspected
instituted
led
managed
merged
motivated
organized
originated
overhauled
oversaw
planned
presided
prioritized

produced
recommended
reorganized
replaced
restored
reviewed
scheduled
streamlined
strengthened
supervised
terminated

Communication/ People Skills

addressed
advertised
arbitrated
arranged
articulated
authored
clarified
collaborated
communicated
composed
condensed
conferred
consulted
contacted
conveyed
convinced
corresponded
debated
defined
described
developed
directed
discussed
drafted
edited
elicited
enlisted
explained
expressed
formulated
furnished
incorporated
influenced
interacted
interpreted

interviewed
involved
joined
judged
lectured
listened
marketed
mediated
moderated
negotiated
observed
outlined
participated
persuaded
presented
promoted
proposed
publicized
reconciled
recruited
referred
reinforced
reported
resolved
responded
solicited
specified
spoke
suggested
summarized
synthesized
translated
wrote

Research Skills

analyzed
clarified
collected
compared
conducted
critiqued
detected
determined
diagnosed
evaluated
examined
experimented
explored
extracted

formulated
gathered
identified
inspected
interpreted
interviewed
invented
investigated
located
measured
organized
researched
searched
solved
summarized
surveyed
systematized
tested

Technical Skills

adapted
assembled
built
calculated
computed
conserved
constructed
converted
debugged
designed
determined
developed
engineered
fabricated
fortified
installed
maintained
operated
overhauled
printed
programmed
rectified
regulated
remodeled
repaired
replaced
restored
solved

ACTION VERBS for Resumes

Organized by Skill

specialized
standardized
studied
upgraded
utilized

Teaching Skills

adapted
advised
clarified
coached
communicated
conducted
coordinated
critiqued
developed
enabled
encouraged
evaluated
explained
facilitated
focused
guided
individualized
informed
instilled
instructed
motivated
persuaded
set goals
simulated
stimulated
taught
tested
trained
transmitted
tutored

Financial/ Data Skills

administered
adjusted
allocated
analyzed
appraised
assessed
audited

balanced
calculated
computed
conserved
corrected
determined
developed
estimated
forecasted
managed
marketed
measured
planned
programmed
projected
reconciled
reduced
researched
retrieved

Creative Skills

acted
adapted
began
combined
conceptualized
condensed
created
customized
designed
developed
directed
displayed
drew
entertained
established
fashioned
formulated
founded
illustrated
initiated
instituted
integrated
introduced
invented
modeled
modified
originated

performed
photographed
planned
revised
revitalized
shaped
solved

Helping Skills

adapted
advocated
aided
answered
arranged
assessed
assisted
cared for
clarified
coached
collaborated
contributed
cooperated
counseled
demonstrated
diagnosed
educated
encouraged
ensured
expedited
facilitated
familiarize
furthered
guided
helped
insured
intervened
motivated
provided
referred
rehabilitated
presented
resolved
simplified
supplied
supported
volunteered

Organization/ Detail Skills

approved
arranged
cataloged
categorized
charted
classified
coded
collected
compiled
corresponded
distributed
executed
filed
generated
implemented
incorporated
inspected
logged
maintained
monitored
obtained
operated
ordered
organized
prepared
processed
provided
purchased
recorded
registered
reserved
responded
reviewed
routed
scheduled
screened
set up
submitted
supplied
standardized
systematized
updated
validated
verified

SAMPLE RESUME (Business)

Joseph “Joe” Smith

540-555-1234 • imstudent@mail.roanoke.edu • LinkedIn Profile Link

Education: **Bachelor of Business Administration**, May 2025
Concentration: Finance, GPA: 3.4
Roanoke College, Salem, VA

Relevant Experience: **Intern**, Prudential Financial, Charleston, SC
May 2024 – Present

- Develop understanding of federal regulations regarding investment rules and laws in order to best advise clients with regard to wealth management
- Prepare client meeting materials, including reports, presentations and financial projects and shadow certified financial planners during client meetings
- Collect and organize client confidential financial information including income, expenses, assets and liabilities
- Conduct market research and analysis to identify trends, risks and investment opportunities
- Maintain office files, assist with data entry and generate reports to ready staff for meetings

Student Assistant, Roanoke College Campus Store, Salem, VA
September 2022 – Present

- Provide quality customer service, support students, faculty, staff and store guests with product selection, pricing and sales transactions
- Operate POS and provide appropriate change, process credit sales and apply appropriate discounts for accurate bookkeeping
- Fill on-line orders, monitor inventory and communicate store need to management
- Serve as part of team to meet daily operational tasks including maintaining store, stocking inventory and setting store displays

Other Experience: **Team Member**, Carowinds Amusement Park, Charlotte, NC
May 2021 – August 2021

- Greeted guests and operated various park rides
- Followed safety procedures to ensure wellness and safety of guests
- Rotated to various park locations and adapted quickly to accommodate daily operations

Skills: Microsoft Office Suite: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Access
SPSS Statistical Software

Special Projects: **Roanoke College Student Managed Fund**, Roanoke College Business Department
September 2023 – Present

- Participate in student organization charged with overseeing and managing \$1,000,000+ in stocked market investments
- Pitch ideas and rationale for stock sales and purchase

Business Policy – Roanoke College Business Capstone Class
January – May 2024

- Worked as part of four-member student team to create and implement comprehensive business plan to meet community need
- Met with business leaders to determine logistics and review business plan
- Created financial plan, including projections and operating budget
- Presented findings to area business leaders, college faculty, and special guests

Activities: Roanoke College Campus Activities Board Sigma Chi Social Fraternity

SAMPLE RESUME (Biology)

Meredith Burnett

540-555-1234 • meburnett@mail.roanoke.edu • LinkedIn

Education

Bachelor of Science, Biology, May 2025

Minor: Chemistry

GPA: 3.72

Roanoke College, Salem, VA

Study Abroad: Rome, Italy, May 2023; Intensive Learning Course – History of Olympics

Research Experience

Student Researcher, September 2023 – Present, Roanoke College Biology Department, Salem, VA

- Work alongside Roanoke College faculty to study zebra fish and effects estrogen levels have on weight gain and loss
- Gather and analyze data to determine trends, factors, and timelines for weight fluctuation
- Collaborate with undergraduate team to monitor zebra fish for changes in health
- Chart findings and share progress with undergraduate research team to prepare for future study
- Develop understanding of proper laboratory policies and procedures and follow safety protocol

Relevant Experience

Assistant, May – August 2022, May – August, 2023, Harris Animal Hospital, New Haven CT

- Greeted pet owners and processed paperwork and payment before and after pet care visits
- Provided daily care to animals during overnight visits and assisted with administration of medication
- Shadowed veterinarians during routine office visits and aided with recording vitals for records
- Observed small animal medical procedures and surgeries
- Cleaned examination rooms and equipment to prepare for future appointments
- Answered client questions and referred pet owners to appropriate resource for further information

Other Work Experience

Student Dish Room Assistant, August 2022 – May 2023, Roanoke College Dining Services, Salem, VA

- Maintained cleanliness of kitchen tools during high-peak dining hours and catering events
- Operated heavy dish room equipment and followed OSHA guidelines for safety
- Worked as part of 6 member team to complete tasks and restock for next high traffic time

Honors

Roanoke College Academic President's List – Fall 2023, Spring 2024

Roanoke College Academic Dean's List – Fall 2022, Spring 2023

Alpha Lambda Delta – National Honor Society for First Year Academic Success

Skills

Microsoft Office Suite: Word, PowerPoint, Excel
Microscopy

GraphPad Prism
DNA Extraction

Activities

Roanoke College Outdoor Adventures
Intramural Soccer

Alpha Kappa Xi Environmental Fraternity
Roanoke College Biology Club

SAMPLE RESUME (Psychology)

McKenzie Short

703-555-1234 • mkshort@mail.roanoke.edu • LinkedIn

Education: **Bachelor of Science, Psychology**, May 2025

Minor: Sociology, GPA: 3.6
Roanoke College, Salem, VA

- Roanoke College Honors Program

Research: **Summer Scholar**, May 2024 – Present

Roanoke College Summer Scholars Program, Salem, VA

- Selected among undergraduate applicants to design and implement research project focused on stress and memory recall among college students
- Created and distributed survey for college students to determine baseline of stress triggers for college students
- Gathered and recorded data with over 85% survey return to chart stress results
- Interviewed undergraduate students to test and chart memory after stressful situations
- Reported findings to faculty to prepare for future research and journal publication

Relevant Experience: **Resident Advisor**, August 2022 – Present

Roanoke College Office of Residence Life, Salem, VA

- Mediate conflict and aid with compromise among 30 undergraduate residential students
- Uphold Roanoke College policies and procedures and monitor residence halls to ensure student safety and security
- Communicate with college officials and emergency personnel during student crisis in order to stabilize situation in calm and effective manner
- Organize and implement quality hall programming to engage students in community and promote social, intellectual and civic development
- Work as part of team to promote campus events and ensure student well-being

Other Experience: **Cashier**, June 2023 – August 2023

Food Lion Grocery Store, Chattanooga, TN

- Operated POS, processed credit sales, and provided appropriate change
- Assisted customers with questions and provided quality customer service
- Communicated with management with regard to customer complaint to quickly resolve issues
- Multi-tasked in fast-paced environment while ensuring correct pricing and care of products

Skills: SPSS Statistical Software

Microsoft Office Suite – Word, PowerPoint, Excel

Basic Proficiency in Written and Conversational Spanish

Honors: Psi Chi National Honor Society in Psychology

Roanoke College Academic Dean's List – Fall 2022 & 2023; Spring 2023 & 2024

Leadership: Vice President, Roanoke College Psychology Association, January 2024 – Present

Activities: Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity, August 2022 – Present

Community Service: Micha's Backpack

Relay for Life

Roanoke Rescue Mission

SAMPLE RESUME (Federal) page 1 of 2

First Name Last Name

Box 45, 221 College Lane, Salem, VA 24153

Day Phone: 540-555-5555, Email: awalker@mail.roanoke.edu

Citizenship: United States

Veterans Status: N/A

Clearance: Active Secret Clearance, valid until 20XX

EDUCATION:

B.S., (May 20XX), Roanoke College, Salem, VA United States

Major: Data Science

Minors: History and Spanish

25 units completed/33 total units

GPA: 3.7 of a maximum 4.0

Relevant Coursework, Licenses, and Certifications:

Programming

Data Visualization

Statistical Reasoning

Introduction to Econometrics

CLASS PROJECT: Databases for Data Science: Collaborated with a group of 3 students to develop a database using SQL for a fictional organization. Presented structure, process, and outcomes to class of 15 students.

SKILLS:

Platforms: Microsoft Windows Desktop, RedHat Linux

Development: C++/C, Python, Java, JavaScript

Applications: VirtualBox, R, SharePoint, SAS Enterprise

Document Management: SharePoint

Database/Web: Oracle, SQL, MySQL, Amazon Web Hosting (AWS)

Office Products: Microsoft Office, Visio, Google Docs

Language: Fluent in English; Proficient in spoken and written Spanish, Fluent in reading Spanish

INTERNSHIPS:

City of Salem Commonwealth's Attorney (05/20XX – 08/20XX)

2 E Calhoun St., #A107, Salem, VA 24153

Witness/Victim Advocate Intern

Salary: \$0, **Hours per week:** 10

Supervisor: Name (phone number) **Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

Duties, Accomplishments, and Related Skills:

COMMUNICATION: Interacted with 30 victims of crime through 12-week internship. Met with each client prior to trial to explain court process and timeline. Used compassion and empathy to work with clients as trials progressed and concluded.

SAMPLE RESUME (Federal) page 2 of 2

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT: Created a client tracking database through Microsoft Excel, digitizing records for first time.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Roanoke College Information Technology (01/20XX – Present)

Trexler 369, 221 College Lane, Salem, VA 24153, United States

Student Worker

Salary: \$12/hour, **Hours per week:** 20

Supervisor: Name (phone number) **Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

Duties, Accomplishments, and Related Skills:

DATA ANALYSIS: Complete data analysis and market research studies pertinent to software needs of campus community. Compile pertinent emerging trends, costs, and other financial metrics and develop Excel pivot tables to highlight trends to share with campus leadership.

CUSTOMER SERVICE: Assist campus community with training resources. Manage ticket process for students, faculty, and staff to schedule support. Track purchases and reconcile sales for office budget.

Student Host International LLC (06/20XX – 08/20XX) (summer job)

101 Penny Brook Drive, Roanoke, VA 24001

IT Consultant/Tutor

Salary: \$14/hour, **Hours per week:** 25

Supervisor: Name (phone number) **Okay to contact this Supervisor:** Yes

Duties, Accomplishments, and Related Skills:

ACADEMIC TUTORING/MENTORSHIP: Served as a tutor and mentor for international high school students preparing for U.S. academic and internship programs. Assisted with academic instruction in mathematics and oral and written English.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Completed the setup and configuration of Windows-Based desktop system for use by the Student Host summer program. Installed, configured, tested, and troubleshot 10 new Windows-based desktop systems. Restored legacy personal computers to usable condition. Ensured the compliance of each desktop system with a standard, secure Windows configuration. Implemented an automated system backup capability using Veeam Endpoint Backup. Managed the automated batch installation of system software, layered products, apps, and utilities using the Ninite package management system.

ACTIVITIES AND LEADERSHIP ROLES:

Maroon Ambassador Student Tour Guide (September 20XX – present): Provide tours of campus to prospective students and families, in groups of up to 20.

Chi Omega (August 20XX – present): Serve as Philanthropy Chair and coordinate annual fundraiser. Raise over \$5K for Make-A-Wish Foundation.

REFERENCES:

Dr. Sally Nox, Data Science Professor, Roanoke College, nox@roanoke.edu, 540-544-5555

Ms. Lauren Contact, Chi Omega Chapter Advisor, laurenc@gmail.com, 540-333-5555

SAMPLE RESUME (CV) page 1 of 3

Like a resume, a CV captures experience and qualifications. However, in the U.S., a CV is more comprehensive than a resume and is used to apply to academic roles rather than industry roles.

Molly Green

221 College Lane
Salem, VA 24153

540-444-4444 | green@mail.roanoke.edu

Education

BA in English and Communication Studies, May 20XX
Roanoke College, Salem, VA

Research Interests

- English Literature
- Digital Humanities

Research Experience

Research Assistant, August 20XX – Present

Department of English and Communication Studies, Roanoke College

Research Advisor: Dr. Robert Warren

- Conduct primary and secondary source research for inclusion in publication.
- Organize resources for the “Narrative Possibilities in the Digital Age: An Analysis of Interactive Storytelling in Video Games”

Research Assistant, August 20XX – May 20XX

Department of English and Communication Studies, Roanoke College

Research Advisor: Dr. Elizabeth Young

- Evaluated research identifying how digital platforms and multimedia elements influence narrative engagement and audience interaction.
- Collaborated on comparative analysis of traditional storytelling and digital narratives on user participation.
- Presented research “Analyzing the Impact of Digital Storytelling on Audience Engagement” at on-campus research symposium.

Other Experience

Editorial Assistant, Brackety-Ack, Roanoke College, Salem, VA

August 20XX - Present

- Reviewed and edited articles for grammar, style, and clarity.
- Worked closely with writers to provide constructive feedback and suggest improvements.
- Assisted in layout and design decisions for publication, ensuring visual coherence.
- Collaborated with editorial team to brainstorm and develop creative content ideas.

Communication Intern, Carilion Clinic, Roanoke, VA

June 20XX – August 20XX

- Assisted in drafting and editing press releases, blog posts, and social media content.
- Contributed to the planning and execution of communication strategies for new initiatives.
- Conducted market research on industry trends and competitors.

Community Service

R-House Volunteer, Roanoke College, Salem, VA

SAMPLE RESUME (CV) page 2 of 3

Green
Page 2

August 20XX - Present

- Participate in weekly build with Habitat for Humanity to construct a house for a family in the Roanoke Valley.

Facilitator, RC Success Pre-College Program, Roanoke College, Salem, VA

June – August 20XX

- Served as a student facilitator for pre-college program for underrepresented elementary and middle school students to learn about college opportunities.
- Planned and carried out lessons supporting student exploration of majors and careers on campus.

Publications and Presentations

Green, M. (20XX). "Language Dynamics in Online Communities: A Subreddit Case Study." *Communication Research Review*, 5(1), 25-36.

Bowling, J., Green, M., & Young, E. (20XX) "Analyzing the Impact of Digital Storytelling on Audience Engagement". Paper presented at Roanoke College Research Symposium in Salem, VA in March 20XX.

Professional Memberships

American Society of Journalists and Authors, August 20XX – Present
 Association for Women in Communications, August 20XX – Present
 College English Association, December 20XX – Present

Selected Honors, Awards, and Fellowships

RC Dean's List, 20XX - Present
 Pines Federal Scholarship, 20XX
 Patricia M. Gathercole Literature Award, 20XX
 The Anna Morgan Award for Excellence in Communication Studies, 20XX

References

Dr. Elizabeth Young
 Associate Professor
 English and Communication Studies
 Roanoke College
 540-456-7890
eyoung@roanoke.edu

Dr. Robert Warren
 Department Chair
 English and Communication Studies Department
 Roanoke College
 540-234-8901
warren@roanoke.edu

SAMPLE RESUME (CV) page 3 of 3

Green
Page 3

Ms. Jessica Ramirez
Senior Communications Specialist
Carilion Clinic
Roanoke, VA
540-345-6789
jramirez@carilionclinic.org

Mr. Michael Thompson
Staff Advisor
Brackety-Ack and Student Activities
Roanoke College
540-456-7890
mthompson@roanoke.edu

TIPS for Federal Government Applications

Know where to look.

USAJobs.gov is a one-stop shop for federal openings, descriptions, benefits, and how to apply.

Start early.

The federal application process can take a long time.

Start with your basic resume.

Aim for 2-4 pages in length.

- Federal resumes are expected to be longer and include more details.
 - USAJobs.gov has an online resume builder that includes all the fields needed for a federal resume. It will walk you through the requirements and you can format the sections as you go.

Closely follow the vacancy announcement.

Identify keywords that can be used in ALL CAPS as headings for your work history and college projects.

- Carefully review all duties and qualifications – you must at least meet the minimum requirements – more is better!
- Be explicit, being vaguely qualified doesn't cut it.
- Print off the position description and highlight all required skills, then type in your resume sections as you go.

Include your relevant/major courses for related experience.

Share your completed units, along with any major papers or projects and GPA if 3.5 or above.

Provide the following information for all paid and non-paid work experience related to the job you are applying for:

- Job titles (if a federal role, include series and pay grade)
- Duties and accomplishments
 - Include duties first and then a short list of accomplishments.
 - Highlight skills in all caps or bold to stand out.
- Employer's name and address
- Supervisor's name, phone number, and if they can be contacted
- Starting and end dates (month and year)
- Hours per week, and salary

Gain an advantage through networking.

Your application may get more attention if you know someone on the inside. Attend workshops, connect with alumni, calling hiring managers, and check with the USAJobs Pathways Programs for students and recent grads to get more experience.

Other resources:

[OPM.gov \(U.S. Office of Personnel Management\)](https://www.opm.gov)

[USAJOBS.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov)

[GoGovernment.org](https://www.gogovernment.org)

COVER LETTER CHECKLIST

What is a cover letter? A cover letter is a way to introduce yourself and highlight your skills and fit specific for the opportunity to which you are applying. It expands on the information you share in your resume and provides more details about how you would be a good fit for a position.

Overall Format

- One page, concise, written in an active voice.
- Single-space paragraphs without indents; double space between paragraphs.
- Include the same header at the top of your page as the one from your resume.
- Under your header, include the company's address with the hiring manager's name, organization, and physical address.
- Check the job posting, company website, and LinkedIn to find the person hiring.
 - Avoid using "To whom it may concern:"
 - If you cannot identify the person, some options include hiring manager or hiring committee.
- Cover letter is free of spelling, grammar, and formatting errors.
- Use the same font style and size as the resume.
- Save as a .pdf with your name included in the file name.

CHECK OUT
additional cover
letter resources online.



Opening Paragraph

- Includes the position you are applying for, how you learned about the opportunity, interest in the employer, and key strengths you have that align with the role.
 - If you learned about the opportunity through a connection to the employer, be sure to include their name here.

Body Paragraphs (1-3)

- Tie your experiences to the goals and skills need for the position that demonstrate your research and "fit" for this opportunity including key words, verbs, and skills listed in the posting.
- Describe examples of your accomplishments and successes to provide concrete evidence of your skills.
 - Expand on 2-3 of your experiences, education, and skills that meet the qualifications specified in the description.
- Indicate what you can do for an employer based on the position and organization's needs, not how they can benefit you .
- Avoid starting too many sentences with "I" and do not use cliché phrases, like "proven track record."

Closing Paragraph

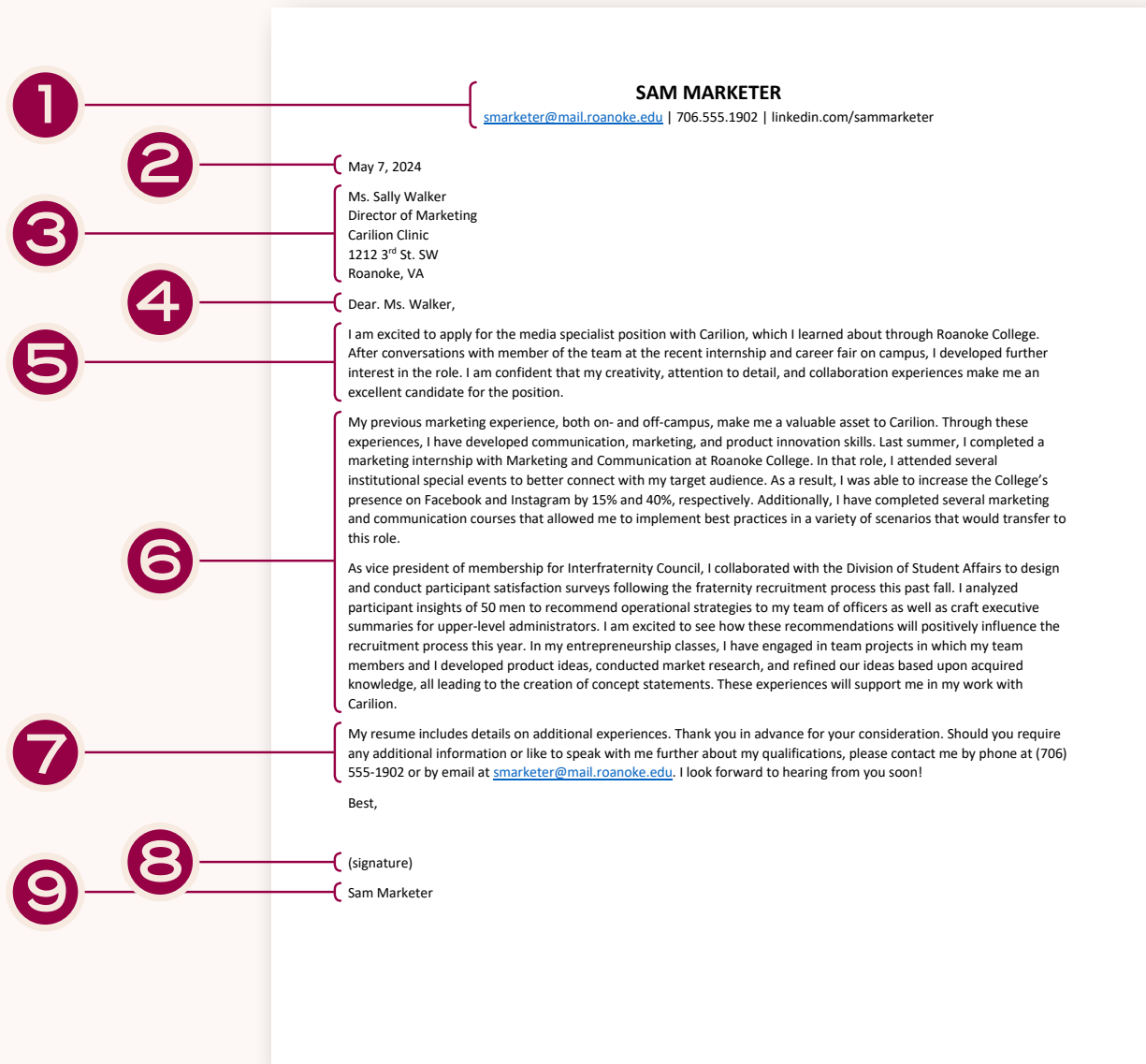
- Include a recap of why you are a good fit for the position.
- Include a way to contact you.
 - Thank the employer for the opportunity to apply and their consideration.

**Get your final document
reviewed by an expert at PLACE.**

Schedule an appointment on Handshake at
roanoke.joinhandshake.com/login.



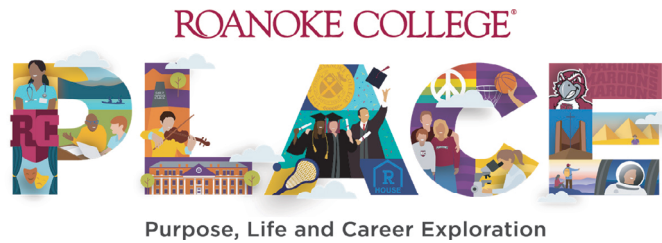
COVER LETTER PARTS



- 1 **Your contact information:** This can be formatted in the same way your resume header is listed. Your name, email, phone number, and LinkedIn URL (optional) should be included.
- 2 **Date of the letter.**
- 3 **Contact of the organization:** Use an individual's name whenever possible.
- 4 **Salutation:** If you are unable to find a direct contact, addressing to some version of "Hiring Committee" is the next best option.
- 5 **First paragraph:** Includes why you are writing, the name of company and position for which you are applying; you can mention how you learned of the position, if someone referred you to the opening, and why you are interested in the particular role.
- 6 **Body paragraph(s):** These are the paragraph(s) to sell yourself! Briefly describe the skills and/or experiences you have that fit the requirements of the role. Mention qualifications and achievements from previous experiences you have. It is ideal to link your skills to specific requirements from the job description and be specific about what you can bring to the organization.
- 7 **Closing paragraph:** Refer the reader to your resume and other application materials, while declaring your interest in further discussing your qualifications in an interview. Make it easy for them to reach you and include your phone number and email address. Thank the contact person for their time and consideration.
- 8 **You signature.**
- 9 **Your name.**

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Standard Format



221 College Lane
Student Box ####
Salem, VA 24153

April 25, 20XX

Waverly Athletic Club
Mr. Allen Boston
10 Summer Court
Roanoke, VA 24019

Dear Mr. Allen,

I am writing in regard to lifeguard position available at Waverly Athletic Club (WAC) in Roanoke, VA. John Smith, a WAC fitness instructor, encouraged me to apply. I recently completed my American Red Cross Lifeguard Licensure and look forward to serving a healthcare facility in this capacity.

Currently, I am completing my sophomore year at Roanoke College where I maintain a cumulative GPA of a 3.6. This year, I participated in Varsity Swim Team, French Club and an active member of Campus Ministry. My involvement in extra-curricular activities has allowed me to develop time management and communication skills which will prove beneficial as I transition into working with pool guests and WAC members.

The completion of my American Red Cross Lifeguard Certification included First Aid and CPR training and allowed me pool time to practice water safety and proper lifeguarding protocol, as well as study various cases to determine proper course of action. I am attentive and pay keen attention to detail. As a competitive dancer and volunteer at my dance studio, it is important that I pay attention to detail in order to avoid injury and assist with student development. I am confident in my ability to apply my learned and developed skill set to lifeguarding responsibilities in order to maintain patron safety.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my application. I am very interested in this position and can be available for an interview at your convenience. Please feel free to reach out to me by email at mjohnson@mail.roanoke.edu or by phone at ###-###-####. I welcome the opportunity to further detail my qualifications for this position as I learn more about the expectations of the role.

Sincerely,

Matt Johnson

SAMPLE COVER LETTER T-Letter Format

Another version of the cover letter is the T-Letter format. It is most impactful when there is a job description that has specific qualifications and/or requirements listed.

Jane P. Smith

email@mail.roanoke.edu | 555.555.1234 | [personalizedlinkedinURL](#)

April 30, 2024

Cvent, Inc
8180 Greensboro Drive
McLean, VA 22102

Dear Search Director,

I was pleased to see your advertisement for Management Trainee, Client Services Team on LinkedIn.com April 30th, because it appears to be a very close match with my skills and experience. For your convenience, I have included a point-by-point comparison of your stated requirements with my qualifications.

Your Requirements

Draw up business case for action, time plan for execution and present to the Senior Vice President for approval and execution

Manage communication with internal and external clients

Ability to track key performance metrics and take business decisions

Ability to identify, model and implement solutions for business situations and client needs

Leadership skills and traits

Bachelor's degree required

My Qualifications

Devised and wrote custom action plans to help sorority meet established objectives that built members confidence and instilled a desire to excel and progress

Initiated partnering with RC Success Leadership Team to develop internal communications and promote organizational, personnel, and student developmental programs. Chosen to be one of only four students at ChangemakerZ to manage all communication to successfully promote the event to over 1000 students, faculty, and staff.

Conducted detailed analyses of student data, assessing and identifying training and skills deficiencies. Selected to present, share findings, and make recommendations in weekly staff meetings.

Implemented several successful recruitment programs increasing student participation in events by over 30% in 1st six months of being elected to position.

Promoted from Cashier to Team Lead then to Assistant Manager based on consistent leadership, effective communication, and the ability to develop key staff and customer relationships.

Bachelor of Business Administration, Roanoke College, May 2024

My resume includes details on additional experiences. Thank you in advance for your consideration. Should you require any additional information or like to speak with me further about my qualifications, please contact me by phone at 555-555-1234 or by email at janepsmith@mail.roanoke.edu. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,
Jane P. Smith



HOW TO FIND PEOPLE

for References and Recommendations

Start early (like now!) to develop and maintain intentional relationships with your professors, employers/supervisors, student organization advisors, and others. **Visit PLACE to learn more about developing and sustaining connections.**

For References

1

Figure out who to ask: Identify people you know well and provide a positive review of you and your work. They should be able to talk about your skills, qualities, and performance in a classroom or professional setting. People you've worked with recently are your best bet – they'll remember more about you!

2

Ask for permission first: Before sharing any contact information, ask your references for permission first. Give them the job posting(s) and your most recent resume to provide context to better advocate for you.

3

Have a reference page: Develop a page with your references and contact information that matches your resume. Don't include references on your resume or include the statement "references available on request." Share your references only when requested.

For Letters of Recommendation

1

Be strategic: Ask for recommendation letters from people who can speak to your specific ability to be successful in an academic environment (typically professors or academic advisors) or can speak to your fit in the profession (current or former supervisors who know you well).

2

Be current: Prioritize your current contacts and those relationships that are maintained over older ones. They will be better positioned to know you today compared to years ago.

3

Be thoughtful: Ask well in advance of your timeline (4-6 weeks). Identify clear instructions, share copies of your application materials, and deadline. Remind them of the aspect of your application you want them to address and express your gratitude for their time!

CHATGPT, AI, AND CAREER EXPLORATION

Tips and tricks for using ChatGPT as a tool in your job and internship search effectively



Check for inaccuracies. Review the content generated for inaccuracies and inclusion of your typical words and voice.

Use strong prompts. Input specific queries and engage in dialogue by asking follow-up questions or “Regenerate Response” to get alternative answers. Ask for specific materials and responses that may be formal, casual, or engaging.



Protect yourself. If sharing your resume in the chat for feedback, don’t include your personal identifying information, such as name, email, phone number, address, etc.

Understand Limitations. AI and ChatGPT do not provide the expertise and holistic approach available to you through PLACE. We encourage you to schedule appointments on Handshake or drop in for additional recommendations and support through your career journey.

Reminder: An employer will expect someone in an interview to match the voice and experiences of application materials. ChatGPT and other AI tools are best used in collaboration with your own writing style and voice - personalize and edit ALL responses for resume, cover letter, and professional communication. Come to PLACE for help!

SAMPLE PROMPTS

Document Development

Review my resume like an expert career coach and identify 5 changes I can make based on this job description.

What should I include in a cover letter for this role (insert job description) based on my skills and experiences (insert resume).

What should I include in a thank you letter for a job interview with a software company?

Compare my resume and qualifications to the job description - what gaps am I missing?

Generate the 20 most important key words for the role from the job description.

Please combine this achievement and these keywords to make a great resume bullet: Achievement: PASTE ACHIEVEMENT, Keywords: PASTE KEYWORDS

Exploration

I have interests in history and biology [insert your own interests]. What are five career paths that match my interests?

Generate 10 job titles that may be a good fit for me based on {my skills, interests, majors, resume, etc.}

What are three specific ways I can test my fit with each of the following roles: INSERT ROLES?

Compare my resume and qualifications to the job description - what gaps am I missing?

What careers will let me work outside a traditional office setting?

What are five questions I should ask in an informational interview with a (insert job title)?

Interview Prep

Create a list of 10 specific interview questions based on this job description.

From question 1, based on my resume, how would you answer in a response that is confident and engaging?

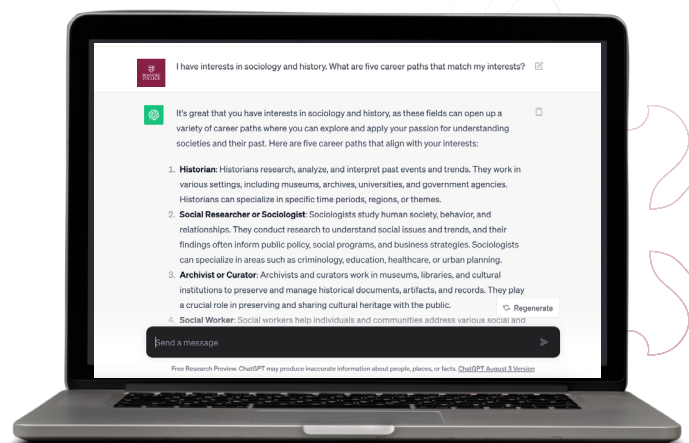
What are the 5 biggest challenges and opportunities facing X-company?

What's a 90-day action plan to tackle the job described in this job description?

Networking

Create a 300-character LinkedIn connection request based on (describe the person's profile).

Based on my resume, write a short and engaging elevator pitch I can use at networking events.



JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

A job search can feel like a full-time job itself. We are here to help every step of the way. Before beginning your search, you will want to consider your expectations and requirements for a new role. These include location, job industry, and personal timeline for landing a position. As you're applying for postings, a majority of your time will also be dedicated to networking and making connections on LinkedIn, with alumni, and reaching out to others who may help you find what you are looking for.

There are several steps to starting a successful job search.

STEP

1

Update your personal branding.

- Ensure your resume is good to go and have it reviewed by PLACE staff or other professionals.
- Develop and edit your LinkedIn and Handshake profiles.

STEP

2

Find jobs to apply to.

- **Handshake:** Handshake is Roanoke College's online tool for internships, job listings, and other career opportunities on campus. Students and alumni create their own profiles to share with potential employers. This national platform hosts listings from thousands of employers targeted at college students and recent graduates. Handshake puts opportunities at your fingertips! Please note, individuals do not need to create a new account – Roanoke College username and password is all that is needed to enter this site. Contact us for questions navigating the platform.
- **Indeed:** One of the most convenient ways to search online. This site searches organizations' websites, making your search that much easier. Add in your skills or interests to help narrow down your options. Indeed serves as a comprehensive online search and is beneficial as a "jumping point" to countless company websites and job openings.
- **LinkedIn:** More than just networking, LinkedIn is a great resource to research companies, locate alumni contacts, and improve your online presence. Additionally, students are encouraged to join special interest and professional groups to develop best practice skills and become familiar with industry-specific vocabulary. It is important to note that because LinkedIn is a professional networking site, it is okay to "link" with people you do not know personally but have similar professional interests and backgrounds.

STEP

3

Get help.

- Schedule an appointment with PLACE for support in your search.

STEP

4

APPLY, APPLY, APPLY.

- A job search requires tenacity and a lot of job applications. We encourage you to apply to 5 or more jobs per week.
- Develop a system to track your applications, job descriptions, contacts, and closing dates.

STEP

5

Practice for interviews.

- Practice makes perfect when you prepare to sell yourself in an interview. See our interview tips on [page 42](#).

NETWORKING

Why does it matter?

Networking is about discovering and utilizing connections between people and tapping into your unique circle of friends, family, professors, previous employers, and Roanoke College Alumni. It can give you a competitive edge in a tight job market. Over 80% of positions are filled as a result of networking. Your network is expanded as you meet new people and through the connections of people you know to make positive impressions.

You can make connections everywhere! You should prepare for networking opportunities at career fairs, workshops, information sessions, and alumni panels. In your sophomore year, plan to join Maroon Mentors and connect with an alumni in your field of interest. For these situations, an elevator pitch is helpful – that is, a brief introduction of yourself and your qualifications.

Elevator Pitch

30 Second Introduction of You!

It should include:

- Greeting: Hello, my name is (first and last name).
- Year in school: I'm a (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student) at Roanoke College.
- Major/Field of Study: currently studying (major/minor/concentration).
- Type of experience: I'm looking for (internship/co-op/full or part-time position) beginning (when you're available).
- Strengths/Abilities/Accomplishments: My strengths are (up to 3).
- Either accomplishments or activities: I have or I am involved in (up to 2).
- End with a question: Would you tell me more about (the organization, opportunities for work, etc.)?

How to start?

- How was your trip to campus?
- I know your organization does (be specific). Can you tell me more about that?
- What is your favorite thing about your organization?
- What advice would you give to someone interested in your field or working for your organization?

HAVE A QUICK QUESTION ABOUT A FIELD OR INDUSTRY?

Take advantage of “Meet A Maroon.”

Meet A Maroon offers a seamless method of seeking advice and support from fellow graduates who've been where you are and who know what it takes to succeed.

Need tips on resumes and interviews? Got a question about grad school? Looking for a sounding board on a decision? Meet A Maroon harnesses advanced technology to sift through thousands of alumni and match you with the most qualified professionals — and it only takes two minutes to get started.

Connect with the click of a button. Two minutes. It's seriously that easy. To seek advice and network with alumni, just fill out the platform's simple form explaining what you need.

No registration or app required. With Meet A Maroon, there's nothing new to sign up for or learn. The process is designed to be as hassle-free as possible. Students and graduates are automatically enrolled and able to use the platform immediately. Responses and messages are sent to the email address that you already use in your day-to-day life. Be sure to add meetamaroon@roanoke.edu to your email contacts so nothing is missed.

Get started today. The platform is ready and waiting for your requests. Just head to roanoke.edu/meetamaroon. In addition to the request form, you'll find answers to frequently asked questions, sample requests, and pro tips on how to ensure you're writing a clear, professional message.

MEET A
MAROON

You ask. They answer.

LINKEDIN

LinkedIn provides a place for creating and maintaining your professional online presence and remain in contact with your professional connections.

- ✓ Develop an online professional presence
- ✓ Maintain an electronic resume, cover letter, references, and business card in one place
- ✓ Increase your network of contacts, including Roanoke College alumni
- ✓ Gain access to job postings
- ✓ Research companies or people you have interviews with using company profiles

You can think of it as a “Professional Facebook”.

LinkedIn Best Practices

- Make a custom URL for your profile. To edit your link, go to your profile and select the pencil on the right side of the screen beside “Public profile & URL”.
- When you meet new people at career fairs, alumni panels, or other networking events, connect with them within 24 hours.
- In your invitation to connect, send a personalized message about why you want to connect.
“Hi _____! I’m currently a senior studying Chemistry at Roanoke College and hope to enter the medical field upon graduation. I noticed that you are a RC alumna/us with experience as a physician’s assistant. I would love to connect with you and learn more about your career path. Thanks in advance! Your name”
- Connect with organizations and influencers that align with your goals, interests, and values.
- Stay active on the platform by connecting with your network, sharing, linking, and commenting on posts you find interesting.

Used the LinkedIn Alumni Feature to Explore Careers and Network

- Learn about where your classmates and Roanoke College alumni are working and how they got there.
- Head to Roanoke College’s page and click on the ‘Alumni’ tab. You can then search by majors or programs to see where alumni are living, follow their careers, discover employers to research, and send message to connect with alumni.

LinkedIn Profile Checklist

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Photo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Just yourself <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral background <input type="checkbox"/> Industry appropriate attire <input type="checkbox"/> High quality <p>Headline: Short, memorable sentence about who you are and what you have to offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Relate it to your field of study or goal industry <input type="checkbox"/> Mention what you would like to do <input type="checkbox"/> Make it informative, short, memorable, and professional (<i>Ex: Roanoke College junior with Spanish and sociology double major seeking communications internship</i>) <p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A few sentences to a few paragraph version of your elevator pitch <input type="checkbox"/> Be clear and concise <input type="checkbox"/> Use key words that are relevant in your industry <input type="checkbox"/> Describe your qualifications, skills, and goals | <p>Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include past and current work experiences, leadership roles, military, and/or volunteer opportunities <input type="checkbox"/> Highlight your accomplishments in each role and use power statements similar to your resume bullets <input type="checkbox"/> Statements may be more detailed than your standard resume, but keep it concise and effective <input type="checkbox"/> Include actual examples of your work with your experiences <p>Skills and Endorsements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> List skills that are relevant to your industry (pro tip: check some job postings and include skills found there) <input type="checkbox"/> Add at least 5 skills <input type="checkbox"/> Connections can endorse you for skills at which you are best – endorse your connections for the return! | <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Begin listing post-high school institutions <input type="checkbox"/> Include college name, field of study, and expected graduation year <input type="checkbox"/> List any clubs and organizations you are involved <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad experiences should also be listed <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for recommendations from supervisors, professors, or teammates who know your skills and abilities well <p>Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Detail projects, certifications, languages, relevant courses, military acknowledgements, and other awards here |
|---|--|--|

LINKEDIN HOW TO

Why LinkedIn? LinkedIn can be a valuable tool for building your professional network, exploring career opportunities, and showcasing your skills and achievements.

Build Your Professional Profile

- Include a professional photo – take advantage of headshot opportunities on campus.
- Your headline tells people what you're excited about now and the cool things you're looking forward to in the future. Describe you as if you were the headline of a newspaper article!
- In the about summary, write a compelling summary in the first person that describes what motivates you, what you're skilled at, and what your career interests are.
- Pull your experiences from your resume and summarize the roles.
 - List the jobs you've held, even if they were part-time, and key accomplishments from each.
 - Have published works, articles, or projects hosted digitally? You can include links in your descriptions.
- Add an organizations section to include organizations at Roanoke College and beyond that you are a part of. Include descriptions of your role within each group.
- Under education, begin with the undergraduate college experience (no need to include high school). Include any summer programs or study abroad you've completed.
- Volunteer? Create a volunteer experience section and describe your roles. Volunteer work can be just as valuable as paid opportunities.
- Skills and expertise allow you to identify key skills you have. Select at least 5 that your connections can endorse. As you start to endorse your connections, they'll return the favor!
- Have honors and awards? Add details on any prizes you've received inside or outside of the classroom.
- In the course section, you can feature courses most related to your career interests or show off skills you've developed.
- Completed undergraduate research or other projects? Add a projects or publications section and describe your work.
- In the recommendations section, you can ask for recommendations from classmates, professors, or managers you've worked with closely to add credibility to your strengths.
- Customize your profile URL – use your profile name to replace the profile numbers.

Expand Your Network

- Connect with classmates, your professors, and staff on campus who are on LinkedIn. These connections can be valuable in the future for networking, job referrals, and staying in touch with your academic community.
- Join groups, like [PLACE](#), and follow influencers. Groups related to your field of study and career interests can help you engage in discussions, learn from industry professionals, and expand your network. Follow influential people in your field to stay updated on industry trends and insights.
- Request informational interviews – leverage the Alumni feature on the Roanoke College page to find professionals working in roles or industries you are considering. Reach out to them and request an informational interview to learn more about their career path and gain insight into the industry. Be thoughtful, polite, and specific with your goals.

Find Experiences

- Use LinkedIn to find internship and full-time opportunities. Utilize the job search feature to look for experiences in your desired field and location. You can also set up alerts to receive notifications when new positions you may be interested in are posted. Be sure to do your research on any opportunity or company you are considering applying to!

Be Intentional

- Regularly update your profile, share relevant content, and engage with your network. Be proactive in reaching out to professionals, responding to messages, and staying active to increase your visibility and enhance networking efforts.

Get your LinkedIn profile reviewed by an expert at PLACE.

Schedule an appointment on Handshake at roanoke.joinhandshake.com/login.



HANDSHAKE

Handshake is an online platform that connects Roanoke College students and alumni to thousands of employers, jobs, and internships both regionally and beyond. It serves as your virtual gateway to explore potential career paths, network with employers, and access valuable resources to enhance your professional growth.

*Here are a few key features and benefits of **Handshake** that you'll find incredibly useful:*

Personalized Job Recommendations:

Handshake's intelligent algorithms analyze your profile, interests, and academic background to suggest tailored job and internship opportunities that align with your career goals.

- Filter by keyword, industry, job type, location, and more to find exactly what you want.
- Save filters and create search alerts.
- 'Favorite' jobs – Handshake will suggest similar roles as it learns your interests.
- Follow employers to stay connected and up-to-date with their opportunities.

Internship and Job Postings: Discover a diverse array of internship and job postings from local, national, and international employers actively seeking talented individuals from Roanoke College. Handshake is the go-to platform for on-campus student employment opportunities, too. Have Federal Work Study? Check Handshake often as positions are added regularly.

Event and Career Fair Registration: Stay updated on career fairs, networking events, and workshops happening both on and off-campus. Handshake allows you to register for these events, interact with employers, and expand your professional network.

Appointment Scheduling: Connect with PLACE staff and schedule one-on-one appointments to receive personalized guidance on resume building, interview preparation, and exploring potential career paths. PLACE is here to support you every step of the way.

*Make the most of your **Handshake Presence**.*

1. Head to **roanoke.joinhandshake.com**.
2. Update and fill in your profile with experiences, qualifications, skills, and more. Your profile is an online resume, similar to what you would include on LinkedIn.
3. Set your profile security settings – you may choose to have a public profile so that employers may find you. This is done under 'Settings and Privacy'.
4. Turn on notifications to hear from employers and download the app for easy access to the platform.

Watch out for spam!

Both PLACE and Handshake monitor employers and jobs coming through Handshake. Fraudulent requests or those not adhering to RC policies are eliminated, but some illegitimate requests may slip through.

To protect yourself in the job search:

- Never provide financial information to any employer (ie. PayPal, bank accounts, credit card, etc.).
- Never send money to an employer.
- Be cautious of postings with excessive grammar or punctuation errors.
- Be wary of larger companies using personal email (like Gmail, Yahoo, etc.). Smaller organizations may have personal email domains at contact information.
- Always do a web search for an organization if you feel unsure about an employer or position.
- Report fraudulent/spam employers or jobs to PLACE.

IDENTITY IN YOUR CAREER

Identity Based Career Resources

The promise of the Roanoke Difference has always been dependent on Roanoke College's ability to embrace diversity and inclusivity. Whole person development can only succeed in a community where students, faculty, staff and alumni see that each of us matters, each of us belongs and each of us has a purpose to find and to live. Therefore, Roanoke College is united in its commitment to inclusive excellence and to embracing the valuable contributions of each member of our community. In every facet of life at the College, we seek to create an educational environment and campus experiences that are socially aware, culturally inclusive, and globally mindful, and that celebrate diversity, strive for equity, and are free from discrimination.

PLACE is committed to developing and fostering an inclusive environment to support the individual career needs of Roanoke College students and alumni.

How to Navigate Identity in the Workplace

The job search is a time when you navigate who you are and the opportunities you are seeking while managing how you will be perceived by others in your search. Aspects of your identity and culture, such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, ability, age, religion, family position, etc., are all assets that you will bring to your future employer; however, you may wonder how and when's best to share aspects of your identity with a potential employer. The tips and resources below are meant to empower you with information to help you proceed in your search. PLACE can also support you with specific questions about your needs.

Common Questions and Concerns Around Identity in the Workplace

1. How do I disclose my identities in my job search?
2. I'm worried my appearance (e.g., hair color/style, piercings, tattoos, religious attire, gender expression, etc.) may raise concerns to prospective employers. How do I decide whether to change my appearance for an upcoming interview?
3. Should I list a certain organization on my resume (e.g., religious group, political affiliation, LGBTQ organization, etc.) that may "out" me?
4. What should I do if I'm asked an illegal question during an interview?
5. I do not shake hands for cultural reasons. What should I do at my interview?
6. How do I identify whether a company or organization will be a good fit for me?
7. I know I will need accommodations during my interview or on the job. How do I address this?
8. I'm worried my background check may raise concerns. What should I do?
9. How do I address citizenship status if I am unable to legally work in this country?
10. How do I answer the question, "Do you need a sponsor to work in the U.S.?"
11. What are the legal protections for transgender individuals in the workplace?
12. How can I research what health coverage benefits are available to me through a prospective employer?
13. I have a gap on my resume because of a leave of absence for a mental health crisis. How can I manage this in my job search or address the impact it had on my GPA for graduate school?
14. Where can I get help knowing how to best highlight my military service as being relevant to a position?
15. I got a job offer and have heard that women often make less money than men in the U.S. How do I make sure I am paid fairly?
16. I am experiencing some changes in my family structure (e.g., marriage, pregnancy, children, adoption, death of a family member, changes in primary-care status, etc.), and I am worried about how this could impact employer perceptions of my ability to effectively do my job. How do I navigate this?
17. Will I only work for a company that I know is LGBTQ+ friendly? What does working for an inclusive company mean to me?

Schedule an appointment with PLACE for support in navigating these valid questions. You may also want to connect with a mentor in the communities to which you identify. There are also specific identity resources available online and below.

Get support in navigating these valid questions at PLACE.

Schedule an appointment on Handshake at roanoke.joinhandshake.com/login.



IDENTITY IN YOUR CAREER

Do Your Research

Through a job search, you are interviewing an organization just as much as they are you! Determining your fit is an important part of the process with employers and graduate schools. Much of this information is available on the organizations' websites, social media, or LinkedIn pages. It can also be beneficial to talk with anyone in your network about the organizations to see if they know professionals sharing your identity who may be able to share their perspective on your organizations of interest.

Check out each organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion statements. This will provide insight into their commitment to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture. You should also consider non-discrimination policies, LGBTQ-friendly benefits, affinity or resource groups for different populations, the availability of gender-neutral restrooms, and training for employees.

There are several publications that also publish annual rankings of top organizations for workplace diversity, including [Fortune](#) and [Comparably](#). These lists typically include large companies and a variety of research methodologies.

During your interview, questions like the ones below can help you assess fit.

- How would you describe the culture of this organization? In this department?
- Are there any affinity groups within the organization? Affinity groups provide a space for employees of similar interests or backgrounds to build connection. These groups can provide a great source of networking contacts.
- What kind of training and professional development is provided or encouraged?
- How are team members rewarded and recognized? What does appreciation look like?
- If you haven't already, you can ask to connect with someone in the organization who shares your identity to get their perspective.
- Is there a dress code or standard of professional attire, and if so, how those standards are set, enforced, evaluated, or questioned?
- Are there programs in place to diversify the organization and senior leadership?

Disclosure

There is no "right" time to come out or disclose identity related information during a search process. There are many strategies to consider when and how to disclose aspects of your identity. You may choose to do so before you apply, in your cover letter, during the interview, after the interview before or after receiving a job offer, after starting, or when a job-related problem arises.

Before sharing sensitive or complex aspects of your identity, be sure to take steps to increase your confidence and comfort of doing so:

- Research the organizations and target your search for those more likely to be inclusive and affirming of your story.
- Prepare and practice with what you plan to say with a trusted mentor or career counselor.
- Identify some of the hard questions you may receive and strategize how you would respond if they were asked.
- Know the laws related to your disclosure.
- Think about how your identity adds value to the organization and role you are interested in.
- Use your support network of mentors, friends or family, campus contacts, therapists, and others!

[It is illegal](#) for employers to ask you a number of questions that can lead to discrimination. This includes questions on marital status, current or future parental responsibilities, religious practices, political affiliations, race or nationality, sexual orientation, age, if you have a disability, your gender, have been treated for mental health concerns, and if you've been arrested. If you are asked an illegal question, you do not need to answer it and should shift the focus back to your experiences and qualifications for the role. You may use the question as an opportunity to disclose, only if you are comfortable doing so (for example, sharing about your family in an interview may allow you to determine the value alignment with your potential supervisor or organization and sharing pronouns or name of use can prevent you from being deadnamed or misgendered throughout your interview.) See [here](#) for some examples on how to handle illegal questions and contact place@roanoke.edu if you are asked an illegal question during an interaction with an employer you connected with through Handshake or PLACE event.

Additional Considerations for Transgender Students

- Am I able to use my chosen name on a resume or cover letter? Yes! Resumes and cover letters are not legal documents, so you are not required to use your legal name for either.
- Through the job search, will I have to use my legal name? Yes, unless you have legally changed your name. You will have to provide your legal name for background checks, social security documents, and health insurance forms. Most organizations will allow a preferred name for contact information, email, and other directory details. Human resource offices are confidential and can be helpful as you navigate this step in your search.

IDENTITY IN YOUR CAREER

General Diversity Resources

[Diversity Employers](#) – One-stop career and self-development site and job board to serve cultural and career-related needs of underrepresented groups, specifically African Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Latino/Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and women

[Fair 360](#) – Platform with insights, education, solutions, and services to support DEI initiatives across private, public, and social sectors

[Diversity Jobs](#) – Website for diversity-minded employers to engage with diverse talent in promotion of DEI in the workplace

[IMDiversity](#) – Website offering career and self-development support to all underrepresented groups

[National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity](#) – On-demand access to mentoring, tools, and support for individual success as faculty members

[Workforce Recruitment Program \(WRP\)](#) - a recruitment and referral program that connects federal and private-sector employers nationwide with highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities who are eager to demonstrate their abilities in the workplace through summer or permanent jobs

[US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) – Provides an overview of disability laws

[National Association of Colleges and Employers](#) – Questions you may ask to assess DEI commitment

LGBTQ+ Resources

[LGBTConnect](#) – job board for anyone seeking LGBTQ-friendly employers

[PinkJobs](#) – LGBTQ friendly job board

[Out & Equal](#) – Tools and resources focused on LGBTQ inclusion in the workplace

[Getting Hired](#) – a job search site for individuals with disabilities

[Out For Work](#) – internship and job board that offers programs, resources, and services to support students in cultivation of skills and exploration of career options

[Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index](#) – a national benchmarking tool considering corporate policies and practices impacting LGBT employees that is put out annually by the Human Rights Campaign based on criteria, such as equal employment opportunity policy, employment benefits, organizational LGBT competency, and public commitment to LGBT support

[Movement Advancement Project](#) – offers an overview of current state laws and local ordinances on employment discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation

[Laws that Protect You](#) – explore federal, state, and local laws that explicitly protect LGBTQ people and other general workplace-related laws that may be useful.

For inclusive professional attire advice, check out [VCU's website on Identity + Career](#).

*Some of this content has been adapted from Northwestern University Career Advancement, University of Minnesota – College of Liberal Arts, and VCU Career Services.

INTERVIEWING

Successfully navigating the interview process is crucial to increasing your chance of being hired for the position you want. It is a two-way process where both you and the organization evaluate each other to determine the best fit and compatibility for a role. Practice can prepare you to showcase the best version of yourself with employers.

There are several types of interviews you may encounter.

1

Traditional

2

Behavioral

3

Case

4

Technical

- **Traditional interview:** Broad questions including things like, “why did you choose your major?”; “what are your strengths and weaknesses?”; “tell me about yourself.”; “why are you interested in this organization?”
- **Behavioral interview:** This is a common interview practice based on the idea that past performance is an indicator of future success. These questions often start with “Tell me about a time when...” To best prepare for behavioral interview questions, use the STAR Method.

S ituation	Share the situation or context.	What were you doing? Who was involved? Where were you and when was it? Give the basics to start your story
T ask	Identify the challenge or task at hand.	What was your responsibility? Were you assigned to do something? Did you take on a project yourself? What were the expectations of you?
A ction	Explain the action you took.	What was your process? What steps did you take to address the task? What obstacles did you overcome? What knowledge and skills did you use?
R esult	Discuss the results of your efforts.	What was the outcome? Did you learn anything? Was there a measurable result? How will this inform your future work?

- **Case or Technical Interview:** These types of interviews may be used by consulting companies as well as banking or financial firms, computer science companies, or other positions where you would need to show a technical skill in the hiring process. Your analytical, communication, problem solving, and adaptability skills will be tested through case studies, business cases, or other brain teasers. Preparation is especially important for these interview formats.
 - o **Case interviews:** situation-based questions without a right or wrong answer; used to assess logical and creative critical-thinking skills. These may be actual problems the organization is currently or has previously tackled. Through a case interview, an organization is assessing your knowledge of industry trends and approach to tackle problems.
 - o **Technical interviews:** these interviews may include coding challenges, phone screens, assessments, and other in-person questions to assess your skills. You’ll want to assess your skills and experiences to tackle the puzzles, trivia, programming or coding programs you are navigating.

INTERVIEWING

Interview Formats

In-Person	Video	Phone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one with other candidates and/or a panel of interviewers. • Plan to arrive at least 10 minutes before the scheduled start time. • Your body language is especially important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be part of a two-way platform as a live conversation or pre-recorded where you are responding to prompts written or in an application. • Requires the same behaviors and etiquette of an in-person experience. Be aware of your posture and treat this as a formal interaction. • Before the interview, check your connection and plan to complete the interview in a location free of disruptions and distractions. A simple background is best. • Focus on the camera, rather than your face on the screen. Your camera should be eye level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This format is typical in a pre-screening or preliminary process. • You can have some notes for reference, but don't read verbatim. • Check your surroundings for a quiet, distraction-free place with strong reception. • Most nonverbal signals won't come across, but a smile can come through in your voice – answer as if the interviewer can see you.

Tips for all interviews

- Practice for all interviews with friends, family, advisors, etc. You can schedule an appointment with PLACE for a mock interview for feedback.
- Research dress expectations. They can range greatly among organizations. You may also reach out to your contact and ask their standards. In the absence of firm information, err on the side of caution and dress in business professional attire.
- Develop your elevator pitch and practice key points about your experiences for 'tell us about yourself' questions.
- Respond strategically. It's okay to pause and ask clarifying questions if needed. Instead of rambling, provide structure to your answers with specific examples.
 - In your responses, point out how you match the position qualifications and add value to the organization.
 - For case interviews, be sure to break down the problem. Focus on how you would solve the problem and not just the solution. Most organizations that use case interviews offer tips on their website.
- Check your body language, voice tone, facial expressions, eye contact, and speed of responses. Offer a firm handshake, make frequent eye contact, and smile.
- Research the organization and prepare two to three of your own questions to ask at the end of the interview. This shows your interest in the organization and position while also providing information for you to gauge fit for the opportunity.
 - Consider the organization's mission/culture, recent news, products/services, market share, stock prices, number of employees; financial outlook; who is interviewing you; job duties, career path, training; locations.
 - Resources may include glassdoor.com, LinkedIn.com, and the company's website and social media accounts.
- Thank the interviewers for their time and consideration at the end of the interview and via email within 24 hours.

For second or follow-up interviews

- Highlight your skills, ideas, and desire to continue to grow within the role.
- You will likely meet with more employees, managers, partners, and other stakeholders with each interview. Do your best to remember names and leave a positive impact regardless of their position.
- Hiring managers often consider the perspectives of all individuals you meet with so keep this in mind throughout your visit.

Interview Follow Up

Within 24 hours, send a thank you note to those you interviewed with. You can either send an email or letter – an email will be timelier, while a letter is more formal.

Your note should include:

- Opening paragraph:** Gratitude for the opportunity to interview including the date it occurred. Make a positive statement about your interest in the organization.
- Second paragraph:** Reference a specific point from the interview that will help you to stand out in the employer's memory. Share any other details you may not have included during the interview that relate.
- Closing paragraph:** Close with final appreciation, reinforce your qualifications for the role, and your excitement to hear from them soon.

INTERVIEWING

Common Interview Questions

- What are your short- and long-term goals?
- How will this job or graduate program support you in achieving your professional goals?
- Tell us about your easiest, most difficult, and most interesting courses. Why?
- Why are you interested in this role, this organization, or this graduate program?
- How would a close friend or professor who knows you well describe you?
- What is your greatest professional strength and weakness?
- What motivates you?
- What accomplishments are you most proud of?
- How or why did you choose your major?
- How has your school and work experiences prepared you for this opportunity?
- Do you think your grades are a good indicator of your academic achievement? Why or why not?
- Give me an example of a time when you motivated others during challenging circumstances.
- Tell us about a time you collaborated with others to achieve a goal.
- Tell me a bit more about your _____ experience. (Tailor this to the job description – look at what skills are needed and practice your response around them. Specifically address your weaknesses and prepare to highlight your positive aspects.)
- Tell me about the last presentation you conducted.
- Tell us about a time you intentionally went outside of your comfort zone.
- Give me an example of an important goal you had set, and tell me about your progress in reaching that goal.
- Tell me about a time when you completed a project with minimal direction.

Questions to Ask

- How is my performance reviewed? How often?
- How much guidance or assistance is available for individuals in developing career goals?
- Can you describe an ideal employee for this role?
- What kind of work can I expect to do the first year?
- What are the day-to-day responsibilities of this role?
- What are the organization's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competitors?
- What professional development opportunities, like seminars, workshops, and trainings, are available for employees?



PRO TIP:

Check out [Big Interview](#) for additional practice and development and visit PLACE for other tips and support in building strong interview responses.

Get feedback through a mock interview with an expert at PLACE.

Schedule an appointment on Handshake at roanoke.joinhandshake.com/login.



INTERVIEWING

Dressing for an Interview

Workplace dress codes vary by industries, fields, and geographic locations. Typically, these range from business casual to business professional. For fields outside of these general guidelines, check with peers, professors, alumni, advisors, and online before an interview.

For an interview, you will want to dress a little nicer than what people wear daily with the organization. For example, if you are going to an office where people are wearing dress pants and button-ups, a suit would be appropriate.

Business Casual

Typical daily workplace wear

Offers greater room for unique style and creativity in dress

May include:

Pants or capris

Skirts or dresses just above the knee or longer

Dark, non-distressed jeans

Tie or no tie

Generally no tennis or lace-up shoes

No graphic tees

Visible tattoos or piercings may be acceptable

Professional

Often for special or significant days/events, but may be daily wear in some places

Simple, solid fabrics in darker colors

Includes:

Generally, a blazer, dress, or suit coat is expected

Ties with button-up shirts

Close toed shoes

If possible, tattoos and piercings should not be visible

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

Keep all communication with an employer professional – in an interview, on the phone, or responding to an email!

By Email:

- Always include a subject line with details about your message.
- Proofread your emails before sending to correct errors and check for tone.
- Use a professional email address – your Roanoke College one may be more appropriate than one you have for personal use.
- Include respectful language, such as please and thank you, throughout your emails.
- Err on the side of formality in how you address the message: For example, start with Ms., Mr., or Dr. to address someone until they've told you otherwise. You may also use a general greeting, such as "Good Morning."
- Be responsive! Best practice is to respond within 24 hours or acknowledge receipt of the email with plans to follow up later if necessary to complete tasks.
- Check your exclamation points throughout your emails. Too many may come across as overly eager or inexperienced.

Via Phone Call or Voicemail:

- Introduce yourself quickly on the phone and offer context for the call.
- Make sure your voicemail message is professional – this may be someone's first impression of you. Your full name, phone number, and a brief message is ideal.
- Have a notepad close by for questions or other notes during the call.
- Slow down – check your pace. It is common to speed up when you're nervous, but you want to make sure you are understandable.
- Practice the end of the call – if it is an interview, be sure to thank them for their time and summarize your next steps.

Nonverbal Communication:

Nonverbal communication may override the most perfect interview question responses. Make sure you are:

- Maintaining eye contact with the interviewer or professional you are engaging with.
- Offering a strong, firm handshake.
- Sitting up straight with feet flat or ankles crossed. You can lean forward slightly to increase your appearance of engagement.
- Smiling and nodding while listening.
- Not crossing your arms. If you need something to do with your hands, you can interlock them and hold loosely in your lap or hold a pen and notepad.



YOU GOT AN OFFER!

Now what?

Congratulations! Now you may want to do a little bit of research and negotiation before accepting a position. It is common to negotiate for most full-time job offers, but you want to be prepared before doing so.

When you receive an offer, you should thank the employer for the opportunity. You can request time to think about what is included – be sure to ask about benefits (health, dental, retirement), vacation time, advancement opportunities, additional clauses (like non-compete), and a start date. Even if you want to accept the offer on the spot, take the time to consider. Ask when they'd like your final answer by (7 days is reasonable). Your compensation package, including the benefits, will be more the monetary salary you are offered, so you will want to factor all into your consideration.

Use tools like Glassdoor, PayScale, and Salary.com to determine what others in similar positions are making. Federal government salary ranges are available through the General Schedule Pay Scale, while state and university salaries are often found online. Compare your offer and the research you've done on your full compensation package to identify the number you would need to accept the role. Use tools (like [cost of living calculators](#)) to determine your anticipated cost of living and see where the offered salary falls.

Before negotiating, you will want to have your research completed and a range identified. Best practice is to determine the lowest you can accept and a top number that is no more than 20% higher. When negotiating, plan to do so over the phone. you will need to make your case as to why a higher salary is appropriate. This isn't just what you want, but what you are worth to the organization. If possible, don't be the first to offer a salary number. If an employer asks you what you'd like to make, you can ask what is typical for the position, and if pressed, over a range.

Generally, counteroffers won't be accepted on the spot as the employer will need to check budgets and go back to their manager to accept or counter again. Then it will be up to you to accept, decline, or ask for an alternative. Don't forget, if a salary isn't negotiable, there are non-monetary options to consider, including flexible work hours, vacation time, or educational opportunities.

Be sure to get your offer in writing that includes your salary, start date, benefits, location of work, and required acceptance date. Review before accepting!

Example email to schedule a phone call:

Hi [name],

Thank you again for the job offer! I am excited about the opportunity and have a few questions. Do you have time this week to talk with me?

Best,
[Your Name]

Have questions or want to practice before a negotiation conversation?

Schedule an appointment with PLACE at roanoke.joinhandshake.com/login.



CONSIDERING Graduate School?

Review these questions to make sure this is the right path for you. Graduate school isn't a continuation of your undergraduate experience and includes a large time and financial investment, so you'll want to consider the following:

How does graduate school differ from undergraduate studies?

- Often more independent, with additional reading and writing.
- May be focused on theory and research as opposed to development of practical skills.
- Higher performance expectations for you as a student.
- You may get paid to go to school.
- You'll likely have conferences, presentations, and publications as part of your experience.

Is graduate school required for my career goals?

- Not every field expects a graduate degree or one immediately following undergrad.

Is it required for your intended career field?

- Do you want to become a subject-matter expert on a specific topic.
- Am I committed to the timeline required? Programs may take anywhere from 1-8 years.
- Am I willing to move if required based on where I am admitted?

Can I afford it?

- Explore the program you are considering. Some offer financial arrangements for graduate students that include waiving tuition and offering a stipend to work as a research or teaching assistant.
- Often, a master's degree in business or law are paid for out of pocket. Connect with the graduate program coordinator for programs you are considering to ask about assistantships, fellowships, scholarships, loans, and other ways to finance the experience.

Do I have to go right after undergrad?

- No, many students take time to gain experience in their industry before pursuing graduate school. Some programs actually prefer students with experience.

Am I academically ready for graduate school?

- Talk with your professors and other mentors to estimate your readiness to pursue graduate work.
- Faculty members are also great resources to share recommendations for programs and direct you to other opportunities to prepare.
- Leverage your network. Talk with students currently in your intended program or other Roanoke alumni who have graduated with the degree you are seeking. They may have great insight to share about where to apply, what schools they considered and why, what they may have done differently, and others you could speak with.

COMMITTED?

Begin researching graduate schools.

Resources to help you find the right program:

- [Peterson's](#)
- [Princeton Review](#)
- [GradSchools.com](#)
- [GraduateGuide.com](#)

Once you've identified your list, consider the following:

- What faculty teach in the programs? Does their work align with your interests?
- Use the LinkedIn alumni tool to see where graduates from the program find jobs.
- What courses, projects, thesis, dissertation, or comprehensive exams are required in the program?
- What are the application deadlines, program entry requirements, and funding opportunities?
- Do you want to live where the program is?
- Is the program research-heavy or course-based?
- Does the curriculum align with your dream job?

Types of Degrees

Master's Degrees

Master of Arts (M.A.)
Master of Science (M.S.)
Master's Degree Programs in Education (M.Ed.)
Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)
Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.)
Master's Degree in Counseling (M.C.)
Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)
Master of Public Policy (M.P.P.)
Master of Public Health (M.P.H.)

Professional Degrees

Juris Doctor (J.D.)
Doctor of Medicine (M.D.)
Physician Assistant (P.A.)
Pharmacy (Pharm.D.)
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.)
Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.)
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.)
Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.)
Doctor of Medicine in Dental Medicine (D.M.D.)
Master of Divinity (M.Div.)

Other Doctoral Degrees

Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.)
Doctorate of Psychology (Psy.D.)

Do your research to identify a program that will best suit you! Some schools may offer joint programs that allow you to complete two degrees or a graduate degree and professional certification simultaneously, which reduces the amount of time required if completed separately. Examples include J.D./M.B.A programs, M.D./Ph.D. programs, and M.S.W. & Certificate of Non-Profit Management.

Certification programs are another option that you earn in a short amount of time and showcase specific skills and knowledge in a particular area. They are typically cheaper than a graduate degree and may help you stand out in the job process.

Some examples you may consider include:

- [Project Management Certification](#)
- [Lean Six Sigma Certification](#)
- [Amazon Web Services](#)
- [Other Industry Certifications](#)

APPLYING for Graduate School?

After you've narrowed down your list, you'll want to begin gathering your application materials.

Application form and fee

Some institutions offer fee waivers for economic hardships. Check each institution to which you plan to apply to see if you qualify.

Resume/CV

Work with PLACE to finalize your resume or CV (some applications may be specific in what they are requesting). You may also seek feedback from faculty members in your discipline.

Official Transcript

Graduate programs will request your official academic transcript from your undergraduate coursework. Review [Roanoke College guidelines](#) for requesting and ordering copies of yours to be sent to other institutions.

Admissions Exams

Many graduate programs require admissions exams, such as the GRE, LSAT, or MCAT. Review the programs you plan to apply to learn more about the weight they place on your scores. Ensure you have plenty of time to prepare if you need to complete an admissions exam.

Take advantage and apply to the Kaplan Grant offered through Roanoke College that supports formal test prep. We currently offer test prep for the GRE, LSAT, MCAT, GMAT, DAT, OAT, and PCAT. The College offers grants for students to enroll in LIVE, ONLINE courses only. If you're interested, learn more, and apply at roanoke.edu/Kaplan.

Personal Statement

A personal statement allows an admissions committee an opportunity to get to know you and your interest in the program to which you are applying. Some applications ask specific questions, so you will want to respond. A strong personal statement tells a story built on your skills, experiences, and evidence. It shows how what you're doing now in school and work experiences relate to the program. It will address your long-term goals for your career and research plans are supported by your participation in graduate school. Avoid vague statements that don't provide specific details, stories from your childhood that don't offer a clear perspective of your interest in the program.

Use resources on campus to get feedback on your documents. Staff at PLACE, faculty, mentors, the Writing Center, and other resources are here to support your efforts. Check out these articles for additional tips:

- [6 tips for writing a graduate school personal statement](#)
- [Writing a winning personal statement for grad school](#)

Letters of Recommendation

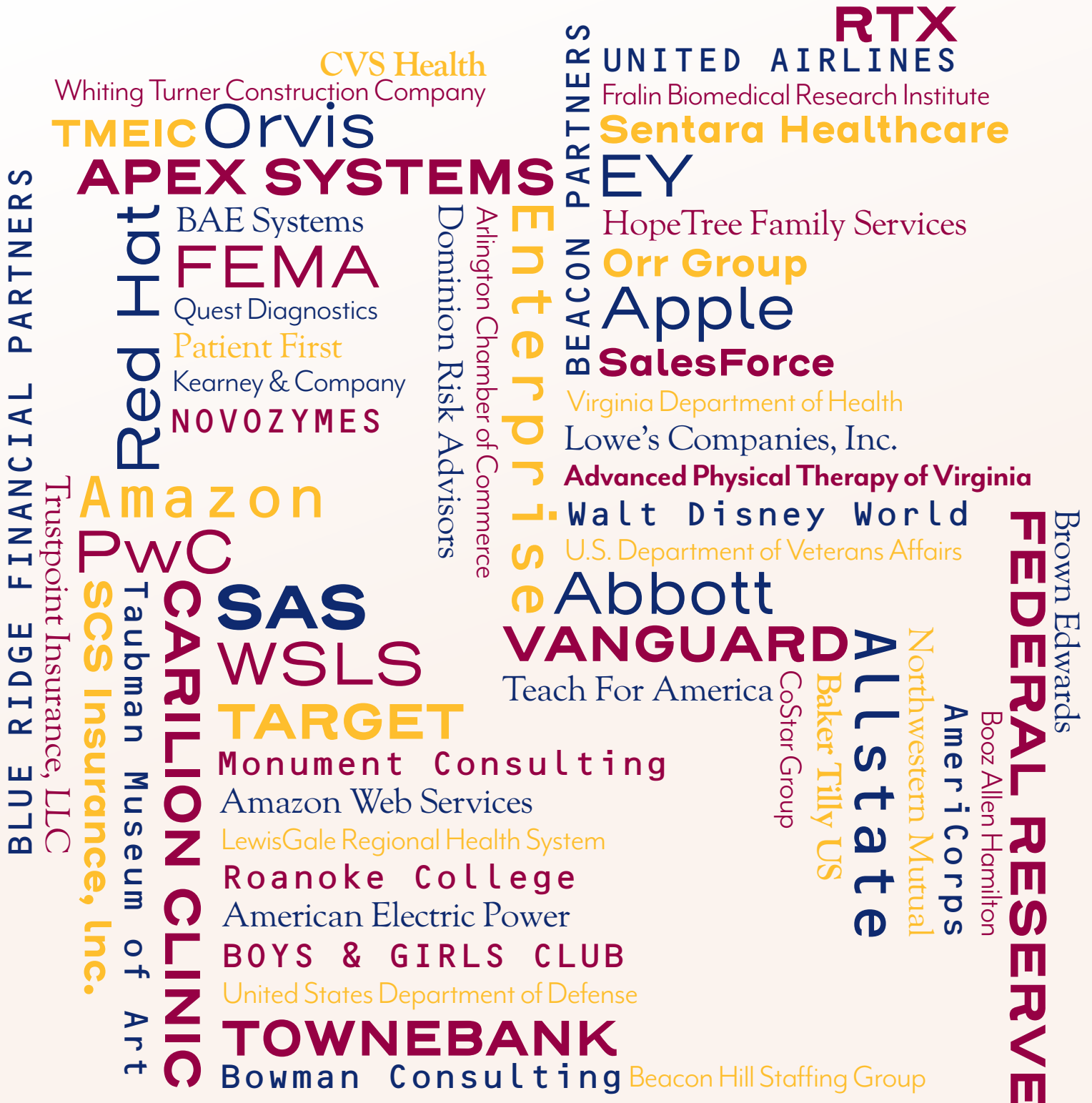
For letters of recommendation, it is important to select the right people to write your letters. These may be professors, supervisors, or colleagues from internships or other work experience (not family or friends). Be sure to share your most recent resume and personal statement with them as this will help them to write you a strong letter. Offer plenty of time in advance of the due date to ask for letters (ideally 4-6 weeks).

Programs may require 2-3 letters, so start early identifying individuals who can speak to the quality of your work and suitability for a graduate program. It may also be helpful to have a backup identified in case someone declines your request.

Graduate schools typically prefer confidential letters, which allow recommenders to be fully honest in their feedback. Be sure to share the details of how to submit the letters or next steps with your recommenders.

RECENT GRAD EMPLOYERS

Roanoke College Alumni emerge equipped with a diverse skill set including effective communication, adept problem-solving, and robust research acumen—attributes consistently sought after by employers across diverse industries. Our accomplished graduates embark on journeys leading to advanced degrees or successful careers spanning government, business, law, education, non-profit organizations, and the dynamic realm of the private sector. Discover the array of prominent enterprises where our recent alumni have made their mark.





ROANOKE
COLLEGE