

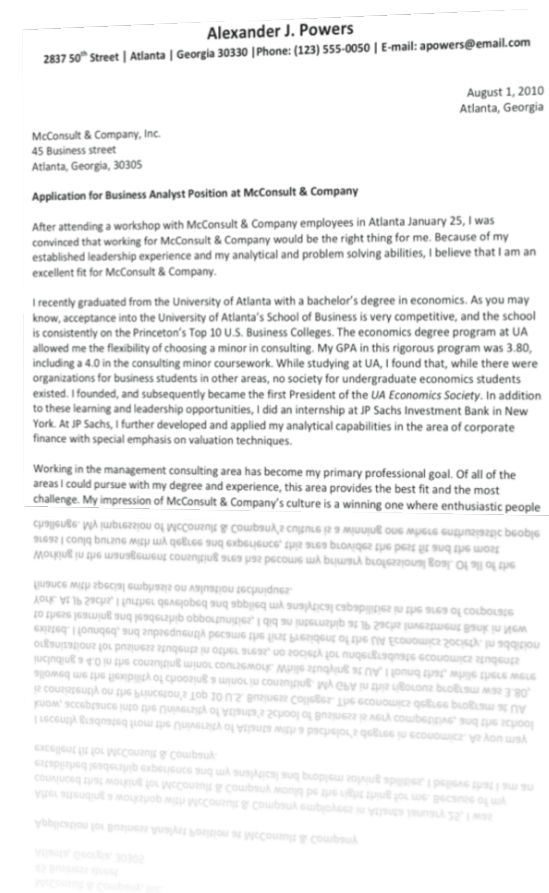


Common Cover Letter, Resume and LinkedIn Mistakes

Common cover letter mistakes

There are three mistakes that recruiters usually notice in management consulting cover letters

1. Lack of focus on the specific firm
2. Repeated information from the resume
3. A boring introduction



Mistake 1: Lack of focus on the specific firm

- Consulting firms are very different, although it might seem hard to see the difference in the beginning of your research. Be aware that the different firms each have their own culture, and even the large firms have geographical differences in what industries and functional areas they serve.
- Make substantial online research to make sure you catch the differences between the firms. The different firms write a lot about this on their websites.
- Participate in recruitment events and talk to the people actually working there. This approach will give you by far the best preparation to tailor your cover letter to the consulting firm you are interested in. Get in touch with the firm and explain that you would like to get to know them better. It is very common to be able to go for a coffee with a consultant already working there, and talk in an informal manner.



Mistake 2: Repeated information from the resume

- The recruiter has probably glanced your resume before he/she starts reading your cover letter. And all the information about the chronology of your positions, titles, companies and descriptions are already there. So why would you want to repeat the information from your resume? The recruiter should get a more personal picture of you through your cover letter.
- Instead, use the space on the cover letter to explain why you are applying to this position, what personal qualities and skills you have that are important etc. You would want to mention some important positions, but make sure that you are not basically copying the text from your resume.
- Try to see the cover letter and resume as having two very different purposes. The resume shows the facts - what you have done, where and when. The cover letter should focus on your motivations and goals: why are you applying, and what is your goal?



Mistake 3: A boring introduction

- Don't fall into the trap of trying to be polite and conservative in the beginning of your cover letter. Instead, think about the recruiter's perspective. He/she gets many cover letters, most of which have a very standard (and boring!) introduction.
- Don't try to be funny, but be personal already from the start. Here are a few suggestions
 - Mention how you met some great people from the company, and how/why these people motivated you to apply
 - Explain what your long-term goal is (like working within a specific industry, or working with a certain type of people), and how this really motivates you to apply for this specific consulting position
- Read your cover letter and be critical: does it start in a way that draws you to read more?



Common resume mistakes

There are three mistakes that recruiters usually notice in management consulting resumes.

1. Including irrelevant details
2. Failing to emphasize accomplishments
3. Underestimating structure and layout



Mistake 1: Including irrelevant details

- The main principle to remember when writing a management consulting resume is brevity, not length. Providing too much information doesn't mean you are more qualified than other applicants.
- Focus on information that are relevant to your target firm and position. Due to the number of received applications, recruiters only spend about 30 seconds going through your resume.
- Too many details make your resume look crowded and disorganized. This can imply you lack the ability to synthesize your thoughts, an indicator of poor communication skills.
- If you're an experienced professional, place your work experience on top of your educational credentials. Do the opposite if you're a recent graduate.
- The length should not go beyond two pages. Otherwise, it will appear dragging.



Mistake 2: Failing to emphasize accomplishments

- Recruiters consider your past accomplishments as powerful indicators of your future success as a management consultant. Hence, don't forget to list your achievements in your previous jobs to convey your great potentials.
- Accomplishments must indicate you have the capability to persevere, analyze, solve a problem, communicate or lead a group since these are the basic responsibilities of a consultant.
- Describing your previous duties is good, but listing your accomplishments creates a better impact. Saying, "Analyzed and resolved marketing issues for company growth" is not as impressive as "Recommended effective marketing strategies that led to 20% increase in company revenue."
- Quantifying accomplishments is well-recommended. Using numbers is an effective way of swaying recruiters.



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- RESUME**
- Dr. Jekyll**
 22 Mockingbird Way
 Baltimore, MD 02002
 555-1111
- OBJECTIVE:** A position that enables me to use my financial analysis and project management skills.
- PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**
- Investment Analysis Intern, 2001 - Present OP Investments Inc., Washington, DC
- ✓ Analyze financial performance of private equity fund holdings in Asia
 - Execute credit and financial analyses of sub-project equity investments
 - Produce annual credit reviews of funds and conduct financial agreements
 - Evaluate business plans' viability, capital structure, and compliance requirements
 - Structured new project/corporate finance deals with capitalization
 - ✓ Agriculture, health insurance, IT and telecom
 - Produced IT/telecom marketing plan to expand brand awareness
 - Products
 - Develop rapid response plan to expand brand awareness
 - Including AI
- Research Consultant, 2000 - Present OP Investments Inc., Washington, DC
- Expanded
 - Assembled
 - Co-authored
- Business Administration, The Netherlands
- Assistant
 - Formulated
 - Spearheaded
 - Embarked

There are three mistakes that recruiters usually notice on LinkedIn profiles.

1. Incomplete profile information
2. Lack of recommendations
3. Lack of interaction and involvement



Mistake 1: Incomplete profile information

- Your public LinkedIn profile will be accessible to recruiters anytime. Hence, it is essential that it contains information relevant to management consulting. Otherwise, recruiters will doubt your capability and credibility.
- Provide detailed information on work history, education, skills, organizations and other details that will boost your candidacy.
- Insert keywords, terms that recruiters would more likely enter in the search field to come across profiles like yours.
- Don't forget to provide links to your online portfolio, published articles or other sites that prove or elaborate your qualifications.
- Your headshot adds warmth and sincerity. Upload a professional but friendly photo.



Mistake 2: Lack of recommendations

- Recommendations on LinkedIn serve as testimonial to your performance in your previous jobs. They also work as background check results for recruiters.
- In asking for recommendations, choose the person who can truly attest to your knowledge, skills and abilities. This way, you get substantial endorsements that add value to your profile.
- Give genuine testimonials to people you've previously worked with. This initiative encourages your contacts to recommend you out of their own will.
- Thank your contacts for recommending you. They are doing you a great favor.



Mistake 3: Lack of interaction and involvement

- Joining groups exposes you to people whose competencies, interests and field are same as yours. This widens your professional network and in effect, you get more career information and opportunities.
- Participating in discussions reveals your potentials and expertise. When you share your ideas and opinions, you also build your professional brand and credibility. Further, doing this increases your chance to be found by management consulting recruiters.
- Updating your status, sharing a quote or recommending an article is one way of initiating interaction with other people. Also, read and comment on what your contacts post. This expresses your sincerity towards them.
- Communicate with your contacts not only for job hunting purposes. LinkedIn is not only a tool to help you get a job. It's also a place where you can enhance relationships.

